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Woodwind WOODWIND

AN ARTS PAPER

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Bette Midler

You Got To Have Bette

By Egbert Sousé

One year ago you were riding in an elevator with Bette Midler, to the fourth or fifth floor of a dumpy uptown Manhattan apartment building so she could take a music lesson from Maurice. She had phoned him earlier from a restaurant to tell him she would be a little late: "Oh Maurice, Maurice!" she'd said, "I'm coming!"

Maurice appeared at the door. A fat bearded man and precisely what a singing teacher should look like. He was trying to be furious. "You bitch! You're late!" and he refused to give her a lesson. But as she left she cooed and twinkled at him and he smiled. "You come back on Thursday," he said, and slammed the door.

Back in the elevator, you began to wonder how soon Bette Midler would be a superstar, and she began to half-sing, half-hum "Chattanooga Choo-Choo." She rolls her shoulders, jiggles and smiles. Wow.

She was living in a ratty apartment herself then – a mess, but a disarming one. It looked right somehow. She plopped into a puffy overstuffed old chair that had its tattered fabric covered with a dingy American flag. Sitting there, she looked amazingly small and maybe even frail – a thousand times smaller than she looks. surrounded in real and imaginary spangles, on the stage – and yet somehow absolutely resolute and straight as summer. She looked like she could take it, and you both knew she would have to. You hope she is still surviving, now that she has it made.

And you still have the candy cane she took off her Christmas tree and gave to you.

* * * * * * * * *

Bette Midler has been compared to everybody who ever sang a note. She may be the whole history of popular music in one little 5-foot, 1-inch package. Oh, a dynamo; a tough cookie; a hot number. Hot, honey. "I want to be a really hot singer," she told you. Then she lapsed into some sort of down. She said she felt guilty about running around trying to be a really hot singer while the world was crumbling about her. It seemed futile. It seemed useless. She moped, she sulked, and then she put on a record by the Andrews Sisters and shook the blues away.

THIS IS THE KIND OF GIRL YOU WANT TO TAKE CARE OF.
FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!

* * * * * * * * *

Oh God, one more party where they play that damn Bette Midler record and you'll shit. A great record though, her first album on Atlantic (*The Divine Miss M*). It took over a year to get the damn thing out. Bette Davis was supposed to have made a guest appearance on it. Just as well she didn't. They soft-pedalled the gimmicks. Bette came through.

But she comes through better on stage. At Carnegie Hall, shaking her bazooms and skittering across the stage in satin toreador pants and the crowd screeeeeeaming and clapping and whooping. They whoop a lot, those Bette Midler crowds.

If she can only survive those crowds. The New York Faggots, an organized pressure group not necessarily related to New York homosexuals, have adopted Bette, seized upon her, named her official farout campy cutesy, tootsie-wootsie plaything. She's ours, they say, and they'll smother her with love if they get the chance. They don't care that she is a hot singer. They like her sassy cracks and bitchy putdowns ("Karen Carpenter," she said at her New Year's Eve concert – and that just got a laugh. "Her singing is nice but oh honey, her drumming ain't worth *shit.*") And they like to go to her concerts and display themselves. At Carnegie Hall, one guy wore sweat pants, combat boots, no-shirt-but-a-suntan, a dog collar, and a rhinestone flecked glove on his right hand. At Lincoln Center, another wore tails with a codpiece and white shadow on his eyelids. They trot through the halls surveying one another like the original cast of *The Women*. One smirked at Lincoln Center: "Those Puerto Ricans wear such cheap perfume!"

Oh boys, it's time for the show. Sorry, you have to go in now. Get away from that mirror, Lance.

They don't deserve her. They didn't deserve Judy Garland. What a mess they made of that. They didn't know what a hot singer she was – what great phrasing, what subtle humor, what dauntless oomph. They just wanted her to break down and cry and remind them of some dead puppy. The NYF's think they are the soul center of the universe. They'll get tires of you, Bette – like last month's jewelry.

"I hope you'll stay with me even if I don't always do what you want me to do." she told them at Philharmonic Hall on New Year's Eve.

Never mind those guys, Bette. Some of us will always be true.

* * * * * * * * * *

At a little New York club called Downstairs at the Upstairs, the tables are so close together you can severly hurt yourself getting to one. Bette sang there when she graduated from the Continental Baths. On TV, she had said that on one occasion, fans got so carried away with one song that they were dancing on those tables. At lunch the day you met her, you asked how they could ever manage it. "Honey," she said, "those babies could dance on the head of a pin."

You saw her at the Downstairs three times. Once a single guy at the next table introduced himself to you – he was from North Carolina and this was his first trip to the Big City. He said he wanted to be a singer and he had never heard Bette sing before. After she'd been on ten minutes, he was transfixed. He was practically crying. You'll never know whether that convinced him to go after a singing career himself – or never sing again.

Bette tends to make all other singing seem redundant. She can do everything, so why listen to anybody else?

OBVIOUSLY YOU ARE GETTING CARRIED AWAY. Singers come and singers go. The falling leaves drift by your window. Oh it's a long, long while from May to December.

But you got to have friends. The feeling's oh so strong. Bette is, of course, show biz She has shtick. Much of it is based on shtick of the past, lampooned and transmogrified at the same time. She isn't just laughing at the girls who sang "The Boogie-Woogie Bugle Bof of Company 'B'" (from that almost-wartime '40's classic *Buck Privates*); she loves them. She knows they deserve love for what they added to the melting pot. Bette isn't just spoofing the past; she's assimilated it, it is part of her and she is part of it. If we just sit and laugh at the past, we are subconsciously pretending that someday people won't sit and laugh at us. They'd better.

* * * * * * * * *

Bette Midler dabs at some clams. A knit hat is pulled down tight over her head. It is still a year ago. She looks pale. She says she has just seen a ballerina dance the dying swan on a TV special and it was the most moving thing of her life. Then her manager says it's time to leave the restaurant and go see Maurice.

She rushes to the phone. The hat-check woman looks up and smiles. "Why, there's Bette!" she says. Bette smiles. You smile. The manager even smiles.

We are all very happy.

Mr. Sousé is a columnist for the D.C. Gazette.

Bette Midler will make her first Washington appearance on March 11, at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall.

Woodwind

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STAFF

PUBLISHER: Mike Schreibman
OFFICE MANAGER: John Burgess
BOOKS: John Burgess
PHOTOGRAPHY: Patti Pearson
POETRY: Deirdre Baldwin
LONGHAIR: Louis C. Fantasia; Susan Cohn
RECORDS: Bruce Rosenstein; Tim Hogan; Steven Allen Whealton; Mike Hogan
THEATRE: Jay Alan Quantrill, Ed.; John Reap; Perry Schwartz
ART: David Tannous
CALENDAR: Ricki Black Joan Colombo
LAYOUT: Paula Mathews; and lots of people
ACE REPORTERS: Ned Chaillet; Kirk Cheyfitz; William Holland; Garvin Walsh; Ruth Stenstrom; Alex Ward

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CONTRIBUTORS: Hobbs Allen, Bruce Cahan, Mary Chancellor, Michael Dixon, Richard Harrington, Clover Holcomb, Garvin Walsh, Stephen Allen Whealton, Grant Wilson.

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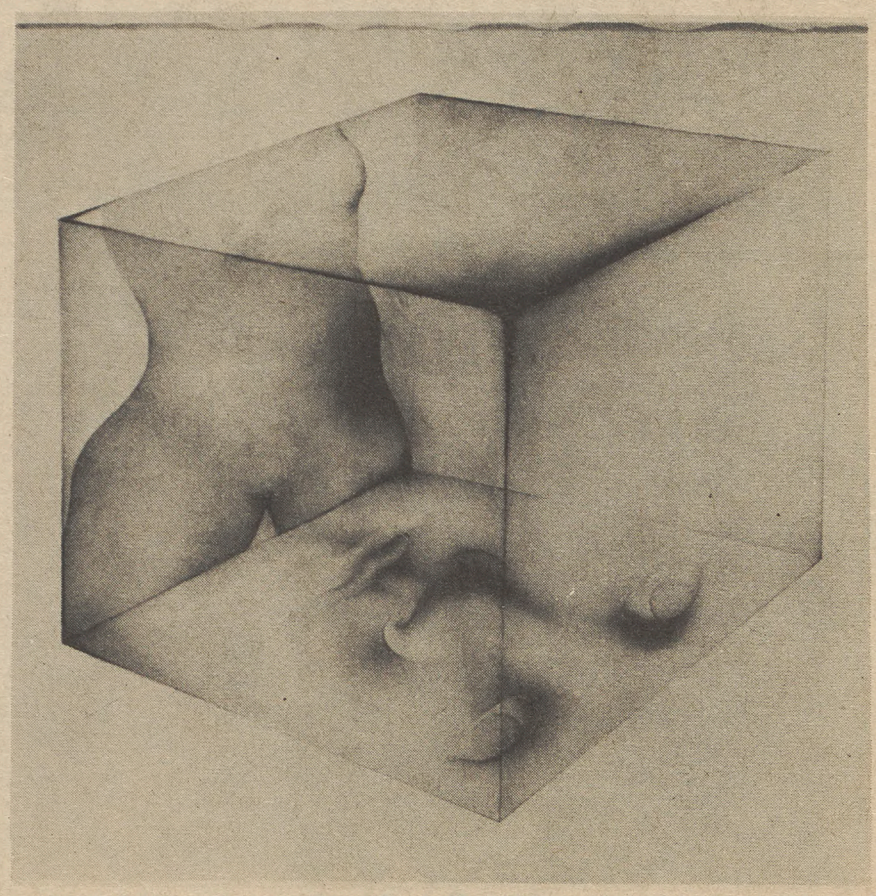
We welcome contributions of all sorts. We are particularly interested in feature articles and fiction. Although we accept poetry, we do have an enormous back-log. All articles are accepted based on their own merit, not on the credits or reputation of the author.

All materials submitted to WOODWIND should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

In Your Own Back Yard



Untitled Watercolor by Mario Toral [See "Watercolors & Etchings," below]

Edited by Clover Holcomb

BICYCLE SYMPOSIUM: February 28, from 9am - 4pm in the Persian Ballroom of the Twin Bridges Marriott in Virginia. Bicycle enthusiasts can actively participate in discussions led by Congressman Koch and by representatives from the Dept. of Transport. the Bicycle Institute of America and the Potomac Conservation Foundation. The topics to be considered will include: the bicycle used for transportation, recreation and touring; bicycle safety; design and maintenance of trails; and bicycle legislation. Registration fee, which includes lunch, is $5.00 Call 426-6700.

DIAL-A-PHENOMENON: sky gazers, the Smithsonian will give you a weekly report on what sights the earth and skies are providing. To find out what to see and where to look for it call 737-8855. This week, special Mercury and Saturn.

PLAYWRITE AWARDS: $2,500 to winning play, playwrite will be represented by W. Morris Agency, play will be published and presented for stock and amateur productions in addition to being produced at the Kennedy Center for the Perfoming Arts. To qualify, the play must be produced by a college theatre during the fall semester. Representatives will choose the best plays to be included in the Regional Festival in January '74. One of these plays will then be chosen for the Washington Festival. For further information: 254-3696.

LES BATELEURS, the French Theatre Group of Georgetown University will present an evening of plays by Alfred Jarry, in commemoration of the centennial of his birth. The plays to be presented in French are: Chez la Fiancee, Les Propos des Assassin, and scenes from Ubu Roi. The production will be held in the Hall of Nations, 36th & N St., N.W., on March 8,9,10, at 8:30 pm. Tickets will be $2.00 at the door.

N.Y. PRISON ART: Exhibition entitled "From Within" at the National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian, will run until March 25. Twenty-one inmates of maximum security at Auburn, N.Y. will present 53 examples of various media representations including oil, acrylics, pastels, drawings, collages and mixed-media.

MIDNIGHT THEATRE: "Dracula," playing through March 17, to be followed by "The Lodger," "Sherlock Holmes" and several "Grand Guignol." Plays will be presented every Fri. & Sat. by Accent at Il Castello, Columbia Pike, off Little River Tpke. Doors open at 11:15, show starts at Midnight. $4.50 admission ($3.50 students) includes sandwiches and salads. For further information & reservations call 780-4900.

Accent Theatre will also present a "dancing fantasy" at Cricket Stage. "Mortimer, the Mortified Dragon," cookies & coke will be at the theatre at 1:30 Sat & Sun. through March 18th. Call 789-4900.

SWEET HUNGER: The making of maple sugar will be demonstrated on March 3,4,10, & 11 at Catoctin Park, 10am - 5pm. Call (301) 825-2574. ALSO Fritter Frying at Pierce Mill 1-4 every Sun. Call 426-6834.

WOMEN'S FEST – through the month of March. See CALENDAR OF DELIGHTS for details. Sorry, only the gallery opening and Women's film festival are open to men.

INDIAN DRAMA: All Indian theater troupe, THE AMERICAN INDIAN ENSEMBLE, will present two original plays by Indian authors Robert Shorty (Navajo) and Hanay Geiogamah (Kiowa-Delaware). March 3,4,5, in the Museum of Natural Hist. Baird Aud. at the Smithsonian. $5, students $3. 381-5395.

WATERCOLORS & ETCHINGS – Fendrick Gallery is now showing the current works of Mario Toral and Jim Dine, Toral, of Santiago, Chile, is a highly esteemed artist in Latin America. This is the first showing of his haunting watercolors in Washington. Jim Dine a Vermonter, is back at the Fendrick with a new collection of etchings and lithographs.

The Washington Gallery of Art is exhibiting the "Drawings & Small Works" of 37 Washington Artists, including Carmen Almon, Allen Appel, Lisa Brotman, Sam Gilliam, Ed McGowin, Leni Stern, Di Stoval & Lu Stovall.

Showcase Gallery, at the Washington Theatre Club will be featuring a mixed media program through March 18. Included will be the works of Madolin Cervantes (graphics), Aileen Curry Cloonan (paintings & sculpture), Nancy Lauderbaugh (serigraphs), Carol Sue Lebban (etchings) and Agi Szarvas (wall hangings).

"WOMAN POTION": presented by Earth Onion Women's Theater. This play is a series of vignettes based on the life-experiences of the women in Earth Onion to show – by means of an often comic style – that the problems faced by women are not unique & solitary, but universal. 8:30 pm, March 25, at Mt. Vernon Junior College, $2.50 adults and $1.25 under 16. This is a benefit for the Rose Lees Hardy Public Elementary School.

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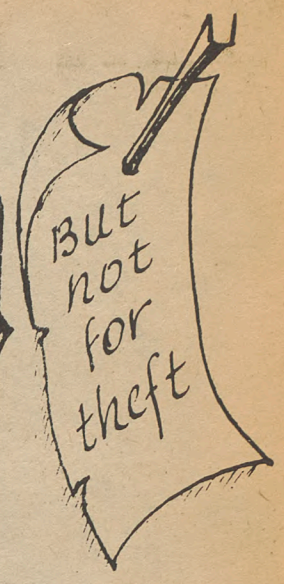

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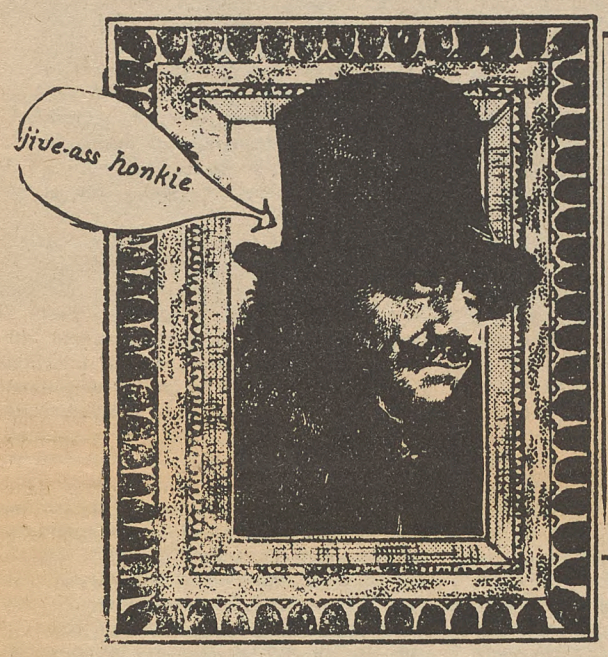

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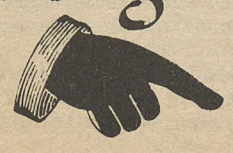

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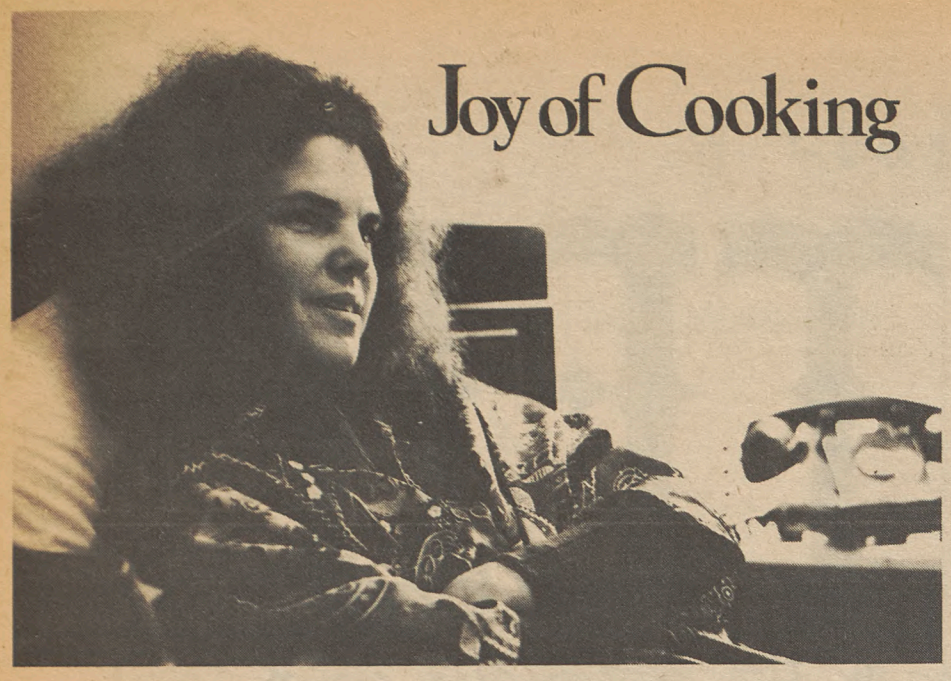
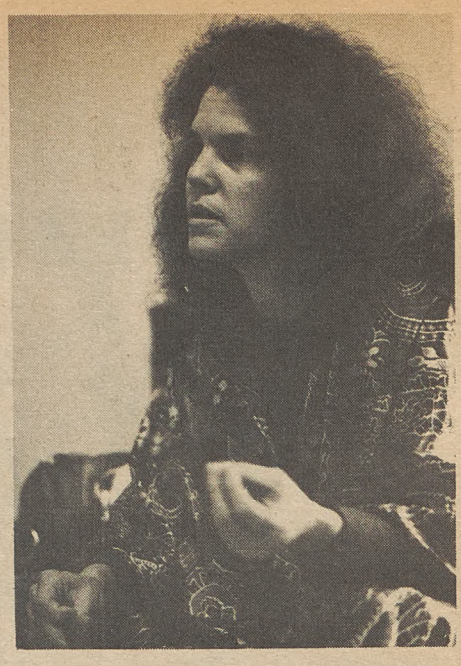
Joy of Cooking

Photos: Bruce Cahan





By Garvin Walsh

Terry Garthwaite provided something of a surprise when I met her. Contrary to the impression she gives when performing, she was subdued, composed, speaking only in a sober, lulling voice. With her shoes off, walking about the hotel room, she seemed of slight dimensions; on stage she is a formidable presence, a woman of considerable magnitude and strength. Face to face, she was quite unlike what I expected to encounter from a rock and roll luminary.

But indeed, she is the focus of Joy of Cooking, a Berkeley, California group playing a successful, week-long engagement at Washington's Cellar Door. The occasion for our interview was a rainy, cold afternoon, so there was a bit of commotion going on in the confinement of her hotel room as I got settled, taking off a dripping overcoat, putting away an umbrella, unpacking my tape recorder and notebook, getting arranged comfortably. It gave both of us an opportunity to relax, to exchange a few introductory remarks. At one point it seemed as if she might be interviewing me: She wanted to know all about my pasttimes, about school and about some of my ideas. I think she was trying to determine where I was at, so to speak, so that she would know how to respond to my inquiries about her. We traded comments about sociology, her major at Berkeley, as if we had been old business partners involved in idle shop talk. Shortly, she perched herself atop one of the two beds in the room, crossing her legs at first, then later stretching out somewhat to stay comfortable. She sat there for the remainder of the nearly two hours that we spent talking together, her attention directed only to our conversation as the photographer moved about the room.

Despite growing up out of the Berkeley music scene, of which Terry was a native, Joy of Cooking can only indirectly be associated with the university community there. Terry had graduated in 1965 and then remained in the area working as a solo folk performer. Thereafter she met Toni Brown who had been performing with a country group called the Crab-Grassers. They started playing together in late 1967, but confined their musical activities to acoustic material done in the living room of Terry's home. Terry's brother David joined them on bass (since replaced by Jeff Neighbor, who was succeeded by Happy Smith), and Ron Wilson, who is still with the group, added hand drums. For about six months they experimented with this arrangement and then decided to add a fuller rhythm section, picking up Fritz Kasten on drums, in 1968. Terry & Toni split the vocals, primarily using material written by Toni.

The sound they began to develop was vastly different than the sound which had prevailed in the area for a long time. That had been blues, country, folk and bluegrass – mostly acoustical material similar to things that were being done in Cambridge at the same time. Joy of Cooking was very much influenced by jazz and, of course, blues and even non-western music, which is foremost among Terry's listening tastes.

According to Terry, they played "about a year in the living room without daring to go anywhere." That was soon followed by working at a few parties and at Mandrake's in Berkeley. Soon enough, though, they had developed a substantial local following and, in 1969, did concerts with The Band and the MC-5. A small tour was arranged and a record contract with Capitol came in 1970. Immediately after that they began a road tour with Cat Stevens, who was just coming into prominence at that time.

"But the excitement wore off pretty fast – and that's one reason why Toni isn't with the band anymore – it's too enervating." Indeed, before Toni left the group to work on her own, she had announced her decision, saying that she would stay on for about a year more. There were other reasons for her leaving as well. She was especially interested in country music, and Joy of Cooking was by no means a country band. The album which the two have recently released, *Toni and Terry*, was recorded in Nashville and was done specifically so that Toni could realize some of the country tunes she had written but which had not been recorded by the group on any of their three albums.

It would be an understatement to say that Toni was missed by the group. She was a source of great energy and creativity. As Terry puts it, "we worked off each other. I did not want to replace Toni. I didn't want to recreate what that was, because I don't think I could. That's something that grew over a period of years."

The departure of Toni required a number of decisions if the band was to go on. Steve Roseman was found to replace her on keyboards, but no major changes have been executed otherwise. At this point Terry hopes perhaps for some backup singers, and maybe for a horn player and someone on guitar. But those will only come after a good deal more work with the band as currently constituted. The opportunity to return to the studio to work on a new album should provide the chance to implement a few innovations.

Any such changes are likely to be directly fashioned by Terry – and, at a time when much of the recently produced rock verges upon tedious boredom, a strong, innovative band will be welcome. Current rock, as Terry notes, often "falls back into some kind of place that you've heard before, and you want to hear something fresh. Basically the structure of the things that we're doing now is pretty conventional."

The mother of invention in Terry's case is not other rock material, but, more often than not, jazz. As such her music is often characterized by improvisation, usually expressed by her using her voice as an instrument. "What I want to do is, in a way, break out of the conventionality of vocalizing and be able to do other kinds of sounds that are generally foreign to American ears. Not necessarily that I can reproduce the sounds I've heard on some records, but I can try or I can get into some hybrid trip. That's just one facet of what we do. To me that's the most fun – except that I love to sing harmony."

Relying as much as she does on her voice as the focus of her music, it becomes more important than ever to make a personal contact with the audience. "There are people who are out there feeling it, and they're saying 'yes,' and they're reacting. And a singer responds to that – it pushes him on to another place, and sometimes you can see that other place. I mean, I've found myself in funny places on stage by that kind of reaction. It's like a whole loss of self, which is being submerged into partly the music and partly the totality of the experience which is shared."

In that respect the environment of a concert hall or of a small, intimate club becomes a critical factor for her: needless to say, she prefers the latter. "In concerts, when I do 'Mockingbird' it's a drain on me – in a club, somehow, I'm getting enough back that I'm not really even expending that much. I don't feel wasted after it. I don't feel like I'm empty after it. It's like the Joplin image that people keep trying to put on me. I understand that in some ways, but that's really not what I'm after. Joplin was expending herself for her audiences. There are moments when I do that, when I am singing from my guts. I feel like Joplin was just really uptight and there was some kind of a desperation that you could feel in her that she was getting out. I don't feel that I'm doing that. I'm not so interested in shrieking out anything – except in moments when I do – than in creating different kinds of sound."

One aspect in which Toni's absence will be especially noted is the loss of her songwriting (though the group will still record some of her material on occasion). Terry needs the conventionality of a song as a vehicle for her vocalizations. "I continually write songs, but it's a very slow process for me. It's easier for me to improvise than to get it all down beforehand."

One problem which the group experienced when Terry and Toni were still together was that to many they appeared to be an all-women's band. They were often admired and approached by feminists who looked to them as champions of their movement. Terry hastened to make the distinction between themselves and a group like Fanny, which had been conceived of from the start as an all-women's band. "O.K., we're women in a field which is mostly men. But for us the music flowed from what we had been doing for a long time – which was playing guitar, singing, singing with other people – and it became electric mostly because that was the best way we could be heard. That was a surprise to us when people started labelling us as a women's band. I'll tell you, that really pissed the guys off."

Nonetheless, her attitude about the new feminism is clear. "I think women's lib is very important. There are a couple of things. One is, generally, raising people's consciousness about the fact that there is, that there has been, an inbred prejudice against women. We've grown up with concepts that we never even felt we should think about. We should take a second look at them. I find myself frequently hearing statements that guys make, or reading articles that men write about women, or about me, and I know that they have certain expectations in their heads, that they don't want to hear this from a woman – there is some kind of a chauvinist attitude behind it. I mean, things which I never would have thought of in that light before women's lib started saying, 'Hey, come on. Question this!'"

Some of the ideas which have echoes in response to the feminist movement are irritating to her: the *macho* Playboy philosophy, the Mailer-Greer-Buckley debates, statements which view the problem as some sort of a contest. "I don't think anybody ought to win. I think the whole point of it is just to make everybody – men and women – more conscious of the kinds of sex-roles that we put on each other and ourselves. And how they inhibit us from doing what we feel like doing. And, mind you, women put roles on men just as men put roles on women, and that's all part of this same process that we've grown up with."

We talked at length about the impact of Art on society and on the individual. She's had many an occasion to examine and explore the meaning of what she is creating. "The point that I think is interesting is art as a reflection of society. Who knows, to begin with, where the hell that art comes from? Who is that speaking from within yourself when you do that thing that you do? I know that it comes from a lot of different places, and I don't think you can help but be affected by society in all that society brings down upon you in your upbringing – it's your socialization process. That obviously has some effect on what comes out of you. To me one of the best examples of that is the kind of jazz that comes out of New York. I'm not sure that Pharaoh Sanders or Archie Shepp were born in New York, but, man, that music just shrieks of New York."

A fundamental aspect of American society one which has an effect on all of us, is the manner in which we have learned to relate to each other. We've been taught by our society to respond to it as a consumer, and as a result we have learned to relate to each other in the same manner. Our lives often are occupied by trying to release ourselves from such constraints, to relate in more essentially human ways – and our music gives evidence of this conflict. "You get programmed to respond to certain things, you get programmed out of yourself. The first step is to try to become aware of the ways in which this happens. In some ways you can do that through group therapy things, through reading, and just widening your perspective, seeing the alternatives."

The hoped-for outcome of such a process of liberation, of course, is social change – a reordering of the way we live our lives, the way we relate to each other as classes of people. But no genuine gains can come without a critical adjustment in our individual lives. "It's easy to superficially adopt some kind of posture that you see as being change without really incorporating it or without really understanding what in fact lies beneath that which is apparent.

"A lot of these groups are oriented towards change, a lot of people who go to those things become prosletyzers and that can be very off-putting. I feel that the best thing to get out of that is some kind of self-awareness and then hopefully you will *be* that way and you don't have to try and lay that trip on somebody else – which is almost like having some kind of superficial understanding of it and you're almost trying to convince yourself, to get other people to reinforce your own perspective of 'yes, that, in fact, might be a good way to be.' It can get very distorted without ever really allowing yourself to feel those kinds of changes."

On her third working-trip to Washington she finds herself confronted with the question of what role the government might play in social change. Her answers are not marked by optimism. "I just find it interesting that this is the seat of government and, man, they've got every kind of problem you can imagine, I'm sure, right here at their feet, but I'm sure they can't see it. They've managed to circumvent it."

Despite this note of discouragement, the future for Terry is by no means grim. She finds herself learning more and more about the music business and, at the same time, learning how to protect the integrity of her music. The group's Eastern circuit is drawing to a close and the return to Berkeley will mean that soon they will be back in the studio working on a new album. And that will be something of an adventure.

Indeed, with the departure of Toni Brown, and the decision to continue to work with new music, Joy of Cooking is at some sort of a turning point. Their engagement in Washington found them inbetween what will likely be two distinctly different stages – the Cellar Door engagement marks a crossroad.

Speaking with a woman with sentiments as strong and deliberate as those of Terry Garthwaite, I got the impression that the future of Joy of Cooking's music – though still an unknown – will soon be firmly in her grasp. For her there is only this consideration: "I hope I can still be recording. That's something I will always like to do: to be singing and making music – it's really fun!"

mort sahl

Once in a while America is in danger of getting one of those intellectuals to lead her, like Stevenson or McCarthy, but we're like Henry Ford who once said, "I don't want anyone working here that's smarter than I am," and the American people are like that; we don't want anybody who's working for us to be smarter than us, and we're in no imminent danger of it. Everytime we get one we head them off at the pass, we remove them. Mort Sahl

By Michael Dixon

On November 3, 1972, I arrived at the Georgetown Manor to interview Mort Sahl. As I was waiting in the hotel lobby I thought back to what I knew of him, what common knowledge I possessed of him.

Mort Sahl had started delivering his brand of satire back in the early 50's. Eisenhower was the first golf-playing President and Joe, not Gene, McCarthy was running amok. Sahl had prospered during his early years, by 1960 he was a national figure. *Time* magazine had done a cover story about him and the *New Yorker* had written one of their famous profiles. He had several albums out and did various bit parts in movies, including *Advise and Consent*, where he played – of all things – a nightclub comedian. During the 1960 Presidential Campaign he was a speech writer for John Kennedy.

But soon after John Kennedy's election, his career began to diminish. There were fewer and fewer club dates. People were reluctant to hire him for fear of some undefined reprisal. There was, in effect, an "unofficial blacklist." As Sahl explained it, "With the demise of the conservative Eisenhower administration, and the ushering in of a 'liberal' Kennedy era, some people assumed my attacks would diminish. When I didn't stop, they found out I wasn't kidding. Then the pressure came."

By 1966, Sahl had joined Jim Garrison as a private investigator in New Orleans, searching for the murderers of the former President. His professional career had been suspended.

But around 1969, things began to change. He started doing club dates again and *Playboy* did an interview with him in February of that year. And now, by 1973, he is once again a national celebrity. Perhaps it has taken four years of insanity under Richard Milhous and the promise of four more, to make people realize how much someone like Mort Sahl is needed. As Sahl himself says, "I have to return periodically to wipe the fog off your glasses."

That is why I was in the Georgetown Manor on November 3, four days before four more years, to find out what Mort Sahl was saying now; what his vision of America would be.

As it happened, the first person to greet me in the lobby of the hotel was China Sahl, Mort's wife.

China is a buffer for Mort. She guards her husband form publicity hounds, nosy reporters, and obnoxious television executives. She also knew as much as her husband about politics and such and was more than able to hold her own in just about any conversation. China Sahl was nobody's slouch.

Then, rather quietly, Mort Sahl appeared in the lobby. He shook hands all around (by that time there were several extras in the lobby: journalists from local television stations and their camera crews, and also a friend of mine who had agreed to act as my photographer) made a few quick comments, and immediately we were off.

Our first stop was a nearby park where a previously scheduled television interview was to be taped. It was here that I got my first glimpse into the Sahl personality. During the two hours spent there, Mort fielded questions concerning everything from the Watergate Affair to the intimidation of news reporters by the government, and every response was one backed by experience and actual knowledge of the subject, something that few people can claim heir to.

During the interview I had the feeling that much of what Sahl was talking about would be lost to a great many people either through fear or ignorance. In a sense, people hear what they want to hear, regardless of what's being said. There is also that journalistic quirk to contend with that demands that you spend no more than 10 minutes with anyone, regardless of the situation. Network news programs condense the day's happenings into a compact 30 minutes every day, and that leaves precious little time for single personalities. I never did find out how much of the interview with Sahl was saved from the cutting room floor, for I missed its airing on the tube that evening. Extracted, though, are some highlights from that interview; gems you may not have heard on TV:

I think that the scenario to justify more soldiers in the street, which Americans would never accept, the government has to create a threat. So it subsidises the left-wing. There are a bunch of CIA agents in beards and long hair who won't let someone like Agnew speak his piece. I'd like him to speak his piece; I'd like everyone to speak his piece. I think this country is strong enough to withstand Adolph Hitler making a campus appearance, if it were feasible. Let him talk, I don't think it will hurt anybody; it'll wash off their backs, and if Spiro Agnew is that dangerous to be heard, if people are that acceptable, then we're in trouble anyway.

I think that CBS did a valiant job of analyzing the Watergate Affair, people are lazy now-a-days, people are not doing their homework. They need to be told the facts, they're not interested in working it out for themselves. I think a journalist's job is to raise questions, not answer them, but at least raise them. That's the job,a nd less and less reporters are doing it today. Jack Kennedy said when he was President taht the only thing that stood between America and Facism is a free press. The free press is a monitor, you have to stand there and look over the government's shoulder. We just can't wait for Art Buchwald to laugh it away. We have to stay on top of them.

By the time the taping of the interview was over it was almost 6 o'clock and Mort still had a dinner engagement to make before his first show at the Cellar Door at 9:00, so he had to run. So, hurridely, I made arrangements to meet him backstage after the show, when I would have the opportunity to talk with him at length.

Since I had approximately three hours to kill before the show, it gave me time for some reflection on what had transpired so far.

My first impression of Sahl during the interview in the park was the intense anger that radiated from him. Every statement, every gesture, transmitted the obvious distaste he has for much of contemporary society. It is not only the intensity of his anger that is stunning, but also its consistency.

To one unfamiliar with Sahl's style, his delivery may appear flashy, possibly a trifle incoherent. Bits of words are flung out in a seemingly random manner, and the listener has trouble perceiving any real depth on the subjects.

It was, therefore, stimulating and refreshing to find a depth in this man that the media hadn't uncovered. Every statement he made was backed by personal experience and knowledge. Very little of what Mort Sahl said was glib or superficial. If pressed to document a particular statement he will, to the point where it becomes obvious he could continue indefinitely. There is as much scholar in him as there is humorist.

With the diversity and quality of knowledge that he commands Sahl is an asset to his profession. Sadly, he is one of few for currently such drivel as Cheech and Chong spew forth is touted as "satire," and performers like George Carlin can rip off Lenny Bruce routines and enjoy the benefits that Lenny never got.

What's worse is that college audiences eat this up. They have apparently foresaken content in humor – as exemplified by a Mort Sahl or a Dick Gregory – for a stylistic approach that caters more to their whims; i.e. the dope-joke, spaced-out routines done by Cheech and Chong and Carlin.

Mort Sahl knows this and it makes him bitter. The affinity he had with young people in earlier years has faded. The current apathy he sees on campuses has disillusioned him. Earlier in the day he mentioned to me that he no longer planned to speak on college campuses. He sensed the kids were apathetic, and felt his presence wouldn't be appreciated.

The kids are a joke, that hooie about the kids are having a revolution. What revolution? George Carlin is up there ripping off Lenny Bruce and the guys in levis are up there with their turned up amps; and the kids are buying records. Revolution is a boutique that sells shoes with high heels. Some revolution.

All of that comes from a man who said on the *Merv Griffin Show* a few years ago that the only reason he was hanging around was to see what the "kids" were going to do. He was waiting for them to start the revolution. Despite the gulf that has grown these last few years, between Sahl and his almost "natural cohorts," he still possesses a vital and stimulating vision for those of us interested in alternatives.

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I'm sitting backstage at the Cellar Door. Mort has just walked in the room from finishing the first of three routines he is scheduled to do at the club tonight. He looks tired, the day's been hectic: reporters bugging him for interviews. Too, he's catching the flu. The phone rings about every five minutes. After changing his sweat-soaked shirt, and gulping down about three glasses of ice-water, we begin to talk.

It isn't easy to keep pace with him, verbally or intellectually. He races with himself to make a point. In fact, to make as many statements at once as he is able. I found myself amazed at the outflow of information he was capable of producing spontaneously and without repetition. At some period in time he started to talk of his experiences with Jim Garrison in New Orleans, and his doubts surrounding the Warren Commission Report:

Jim [Garrison] thought once the people knew the truth they would rise up in righteous indignation. We know that to be different. He knows it too, now. He was wrong. When I walk on stage, as I did tonight, and tell the people that President Kennedy never had an autopsy, the people don't react! I just think they're afraid of the consequences; they're afraid it'll all come down. There is nobody in this country that believes that Lee Harvey Oswald spent $12 for a gun and killed the President with it. Nobody believes that. They just don't want the alternative. They say, "Well, let Kennedy be buried." But what happened was, in my opinion – and you can quote me – is the last election in this country was held in his limousine in Dallas. That was the election and all the evidence points to that. The irony in all this is that when Jack Kennedy was killed, the guys that killed him were coming for us 15 minutes later. You win nothing by keeping quiet about his murder, or covering your ears, because none of us are immune from evil or facism.

Do you see things getting better at all, or is this the calm before the storm?

Yes, things can get better. For several reasons: First of all, this is only the second act. America is like a bad business. It's like your father's business. Your father puts you in business and you have no talent for business and you keep failing. Your father keeps pumping more money in because you're his son. Well, God keeps looking after us for some reason; there's always someone who comes along who's honest. There's Jim Garrison, there's Gene McCarthy, there's Senator Fulbright; there's always a man who says, "Wait a minute." I think America can run out of chances. I don't think we're divine or blessed, but we've been lucky. And I'd like to stick around for the third act just to see what happens. You can't give it up. The curtain hasn't come down.

1972 isn't the end-all. Fortunately, the President doesn't rule the country. The people who give him orders, those are the people you have to look to: the real rulers, the non-elected ones. Those are the ones we should worry about. Who's in the FBI? Who runs the CIA? Who's the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff? Those are the people who hold power in this country and I think we should know who they are.

One last thing. . . what do you plan to do in the next few years?

Well, you know me – I'm hard headed. You know my history. Even if I told you I was going to leave this country you can't believe me. I keep searching. Do you know the quote from Freud? He said, "The basic difference between Viennese and Berliners is the German says the situation is serious, but not hopeless while the Viennese says it's hopeless, but not serious." But then, of course, Vienna produced Hitler as well as Freud. What I'll probably do is plant my feet in the earth and keep fighting the rascals. I know they're going to win, but I would not like them to win without a fight. I want them to have a fight on their hands.

With that, the interview ended for the night. By then it was two in the morning. I was tired, Mort was tired, and the Cellar Door was closing. We parted after making arrangements to meet the next day – which we did. As before, the bulk of our conversations happened at the Cellar Door, sandsqueezed between Mort's routines. What made the second night exceptional was my opportunity to interview Sahl alone, with virtually no interruptions. During the preceeding days Sahl had caught the flu and this, combined with his frantic schedule, made it impossible for him to see many people – he simply didn't have the strength. Luckily, I was able to continue the interview through the second night.

Perhaps due to his physical condition, Mort was easier to interview that night. He was quieter, talked at a more leisurely pace, and was more reflective in his answers. It was as if the flu had produced in him a calmness that wasn't there previously.

At times he would begin reminicing about his early nightclub days, of his association with Lenny Bruce and his friendships with John Kennedy and Adlai Stevenson. He talked of the necessity of humor being present in a person and how we were sorely lacking people who possessed this trait. "The sense of humor, of wit, is the by-product of the Renaissance Man. Freud said that humor was a sign of being mature. It isn't everybody that has it. Adlai Stevenson had a sense of humor and he was capable of other things, too. The closest man to that today is Eugene McCarthy. You can talk to him about anything; women, tobacco, horse racing, music, wine, anything. That's the kind of person we need and want, but we haven't been offered that choice."

There's also a great deal of fear in the country; people are scared. Humor now seems out of place, a little difficult to present to people who are basically anesthetized. Their kids won't talk to them, and they've been heavily propagandized. They've been told that the blacks are going to come from the central city to the suburbs and take away what they have, and women can't walk in the streets, which is another word for racism. And they're told massive busing is expensive and impractical, which is another word for discrimination and hatred. But it isn't hatred, it's fear, and the people have had so many catastrophes it's kept them confused.

The American people are very much like the rats in the lab, where when you apply heat they cannot find their way through the

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Byrds Concert

Photo: Bruce Cahan

By Michael Hogan

If my memory serves me well, it was late 1963 when Judy Henske was wailing lyrics about a high-flying bird.

Whether or not she was actually prophetic remains a story untold, but less than two years later the Byrds were cleared for take-off never to land again.

Occasionally, there was some minor turbulence, but those mid-air refuelings which seemed to enable the Byrds to go farther in different directions were a sight for sore ears.

There didn't seem to be a way to hate the Byrds. Maybe you disliked what they were into once in a while, but you always knew they would fly on to something else and that they'd gladly take you along, seat belt fastened and smoking light off.

And along the way McGuinn traded in Jim for Roger, maybe because every dude in New York City is called Jim or maybe just because. . .(here you fill in your theory.)

But the name changes, even if they were accompanied by a body change or two, meant little. It was Roger McGuinn *aka* The Byrds and you trusted him/them because you knew it meant good music and good feelings.

Yet it doesn't seem like eight years since Dylan stepped up on stage with them to do "Mr. Tambourine Man" or since Paul Jay Robbins of the *L.A. Free Press* theorized that dancing to the Byrds' music was "a mystic loss of ego and tangibility" where you became "pure energy some place between sound and motion" and totally involved. And beyond that someone still felt the need to describe them as "orange and green and yellow and near."

Well, the orange and green and yellow may have faded by now, but the near just keeps on getting closer.

Close enough for you to have taken a whiff of them February 9th at McDonough Arena, the gymnasium that transforms itself into Nirvana every time New Era Follies puts together a concert there.

Opening the program were Brewer and Shipley, but unfortunately, I missed all but the last four or five tunes which, in addition to being ver-r-r-y pleasant listening, taught me a valuable lesson: don't ever miss a Brewer and Shipley performance again. They earned the standing ovation they received from that part of the audience that belonged to them and they deserved the admiration, if not the dedication, they got from the others who were new to their music, this set of ears included.

By some miracle that seems to repeat itself at McDonough, the delay between the first and second acts was kept to a reasonable 15-or-so minutes, and then the word came down: "Ladies and gentlemen. . .The Byrds!"

It had been four years since I'd last seen the Byrds and I didn't get near enough then to consider it a close-up view, but Friday night was different and I could notice that the grin that was in McGuinn's voice four years ago was now spaced cosmicly across his lips.

And so, the excellence of the program had its source point in the good feeling that was Roger McGuinn as the Byrds took flight into "Lover of the Bayou."

Finishing up "Bayou," McGuinn revealed the author of the next tune, "Take a Whiff on Me," as Leadbelly, a little item you can't learn from the live LP. As "Whiff" came to a close, Clarence White switched to mandolin and the band got behind Skip Battin as he ran through a list of America's pastimes. But, sad to say, Battin's vocals were rather london foggy and, what with the purple haze hovering in the air and ears, only a close familiarity with the lyrics kept the song from being an instrumental.

As proof positive of the timelessness of the Byrds, in any form, they flashed back to the first album for a memory-laden rendition of Dylan's "Chimes of Freedom."

The grin still in view, McGuinn then mentioned how Washington always gave him the urge to be a "Politician" (listen to that sometime and then listen to Jack Bruce's variation on the theme!)

Spacing through a couple more familiar ditties brought White and McGuinn to a mellow junction wehre they each picked up an amplified acoustic guitar for some quick pickin' which drifted into "Mr. Tambourine Man."

A pause to switch rather than fight and the quad squad blasted into "So You Want to Be a Rock and Roll Star" followed by an ever-so-slightly "Nashville West"-sounding intro to "Hey, Mr. Spaceman."

Feeling as good as he did, it was difficult for McGuinn to sound as sensitive as "Chestnut Mare" needs to be, but blame and guilt weren't to be found amongst audience or performer that night, so, with a quick step up to the microphone, McGuinn voiced the words "Eight Miles High" over a long and and totally unfamiliar instrumental intro to the song that was once (ridiculously) banned as a drug song.

As if finishing a fantastically satisfying concert eight miles high wasn't enough, McGuinn decided he wasn't going nowhere as he and his three co-pilots stepped back out on stage to the music of a thunderous standing ovation and began one of Gene Clark's finer efforts, "The Reason Why."

Finally, in farewell gratitude, the phoenix foursome rocked into Chuck Berry's "Roll Over Beethoven" (and for just a second I flashed back on the time when Alice Cooper ran a soundcheck in Baltimore to the Yardbirds' "Train Kept A-Rollin'."

And try as I might to be as jaded as everyone expects us rock critics to be, I found myself profusely thanking Georgetown University for once again putting together a truly memorable evening.

THE HEARTBREAK KID

Reviewed by Alex Ward

The Heartbreak Kid is a slick, irresistably funny movie that you hate yourself for liking. Based on a short story by Bruce Jay Friedman, it's about a young, middle-class New York Jew who meets the beautiful blonde WASP girl of his dreams while honeymooning in Miami Beach with his schleppy wife of five days. The situation is rife with those mildly black humorous possibilities that Friedman is so good at brewing up, and director Elaine May and screen writer Neil Simon don't miss a trick in exploiting them. The drawback is that *The Heartbreak Kid*'s most hilarious moments often result from grotesque extensions of ethnic foibles in the main characters, especially in Lila the ill-fated bride, who as portrayed by Jeannie Berlin, is klutziness personified.

The film begins with Lenny (played with obtuse, Dustin Hoffman-ish charm by Charles Grodin) picking up Lila Kolodny in an East Side singles bar and marrying her shortly thereafter. While driving south for the honeymoon, Lila begins exposing quirks in her personality. She noshes Milky Ways in bed, slobbers over double egg salad sandwiches in restaurants, demands constant reassurances during lovemaking ("Was it wonderful, Lenny? Tell me it was wonderful."), and talks about what life together will be like in 40 or 50 years. State by state, Lenny's disillusionment festers.

On the beach in Miami he meets Kelly Corcoran (Cybill Shepherd), a gorgeous, rich Minnesota coed who is vacationing with her family. Kelly is everything Lila isn't, and Lenny is awed by her. When Lila conveniently suffers the most agonizing case of sunburn ever filmed and is bed-ridden after the first day, Lenny begins his maniacal pursuit of the dream girl. After a day on the beach with Kelly, and dinner and a fishing trip with her and her parents, Lenny has made up his mind to marry her. All that's left to do is to break the news to his wife, who has floundered impatiently in the hotel room for three days smearing huge globs of cream on her well-done body while waiting to be taken out to a "fabulous lobster and pecan pie dinner," and to convince Kelly's father, who despises him, that he is worthy of his daughter.

For the rest of the movie, Lenny goes about proving that, if nothing else, he has tenacity. In *The Heartbreak Kid*'s most touching scene he treats Lila – her sunburn finally worn off and looking very pretty – to the long-promised dinner and dumps her. Then, after completing quick plans for the divorce settlement, he heads for Minnesota in quest of Kelly. There then ensues a series of scenes reminiscent of a cold-weather version of *The Graduate*. Mr. Corcoran won't let him set foot inside the family's palatial home, so Lenny begins following Kelly around the University of Minnesota campus. She shuns him at first, but he persists and she gives in. Kelly sleeps with him, then takes him home to dinner where Mr. Corcoran tries to buy him off. But Lenny, the scent of victory in the air, won't budge. His triumph is sealed in the film's last sequence when he marries Kelly.

Most of the critical plaudits for *The Heartbreak Kid* have gone to Jeannie Berlin (Elaine May's daughter) and Edward Albert, who plays Mr. Corcoran. But the movie really belongs to Grodin, whose Lenny remains hilarious and curiously engaging in spite of a recurrent urge to hate him for dropping Lila. Lenny's likeable qualities become more pronounced through the weaknesses of the others. Who could blame him for wanting Kelly when his own wife disgustingly drips egg salad down her face and talks depressingly about reaching old age together? And Mr. Corcoran is such a tight-assed, supercilious snob that Lenny becomes a natural favorite in the battle for Kelly. In fact, it's pretty disconcerting that these characters are developed so cruelly. Perhaps there exists a person as hopelessly inept as Lila, but I'm hard-pressed to imagine one. Even if there is, the excessive caricature of a young Jewish woman we see here is totally unnecessary, except to elicit humor of the grossest kind. Take away the personality quirks, the obnoxiousness, and she is still no match for Kelly Corcoran. Certainly that point is well made. Lenny marries Lila in the first place, not because he loves her, but because he thinks marriage best suits his momentary needs. Once Kelly enters the picture, he is bound to ditch her anyway.

A lot of *The Heartbreak Kid*'s truly funny scenes involve Lenny and his dealings with adversity: his confrontations with Mr. Corcoran; his extraction of Kelly from her mountainous college boyfriends by pretending to be a narc, his snowballing excuse to Lila as to what he's doing with his time in Miami while she's lying there fried to a fritter. Poor Lila. May and Simon have treated her in such a fashion that one is almost moved to feel a glow of satisfaction at Lenny's final triumph. Almost, but not quite.

He's just too big a bastard.

SLEUTH

Reviewed by Lee Westenberg

Because *Sleuth* is not a detective thriller, but rather about the props, cliches and psychological fixations that form the innards of good snoop stories, Nabokov himself might love it. The peculiar aura of aristocratic gamesmanship cloaking British detective fiction, not the question of whodunit, makes this film thoroughly engrossing. For its dialogue alone, *Sleuth* should attract those people who feel their rhetorical barbs need some sharpening.

Laurence Olivier and Michael Caine – the one incorrigibly snobbish and psychopathically tetched, the other tough, observant and, for a while at least, shrewdly gullible (gullibly shrewd?) – are the pair who have at the mean contest of wits. Olivier plays Andrew Wyke, celebrated creator of numerous detective stories featuring a super-sleuth named Merryduke. Wyke has made his country manor estate into an elegantly creepy memorial of his penchant for tricks, oddments and games – a garden maze, a collection of performing dolls, a costume chest, 3-D recreations of the author's favorite gumshoe scenes.

Into this unnerving menagerie arrives Milo Tindle (Caine), a young London hairdresser on the make, the son of working-class Italian parents. Wyke has discovered Milo's affair with his wife and has invited him for an evening of gins, brandies (Courvoisier, of course) and frank chat.

The evening progresses, grows sarcastic, burlesque, mean and murderous. Two British classes confront each other and, with the likes of Olivier and Caine delivering some scathingly choice lines reflecting hateful condecension and macho grit, well, one's sense of "fair play" is in for rude upheavals. What for Wyke is sexual sublimation, stimulus for his art and justification of class privilege – namely, the manipulation of a man for sport and humiliation – becomes, for Milo, a test of working-class advancement and a chance for sweet revenge. Wyke's attempt to enact, for real, the clever brutality of Merryduke is chilling enough, yet so is Milo's attempt to whack some decency into his leisure-class foe. The tables turn and tilt enough in this movie to make the viewer feel like a loose swivel.

One reason detective stories are so invigorating, I think, may be that the genre lacks weighty loads of commentary. Would-be critics value their longevity enough to have long-ago decided against such suicide. Indeed, to divulge the twists of plot *would* be dastardly. It would be like revealing the positions in a championship chess game after the 10th, 20th and 35th moves, then replaying the battle from scratch. The thrill is gone.

Aside from the aspect of lethal battle, director Joseph L. Mankiewicz and his cameraman Oswald Morris provide a few tempting close-ups of false clues (though the camera here might have moved more freely, following the audience's urge, not sticking to the characters' lines of vision). Both Wyke and Milo have fun with quickie accents. Especially ripe is Olivier's version of pistol-packing Deadeye Dick of Deadwood. The parody of traditional detective gambits, while effective at times, was, I thought, overly restrained, particularly in the last half when Wyke and Milo have swapped roles. Olivier's portrayal of the death trauma was, surprisingly, not as moving and quivering as Caine's.

But *Sleuth* kept me conniving all the way, and I still wonder about the Red Raincoat, not to mention the whereabouts of at least three of the six actors listed in the credits.

COUNTERNOTES

AN EVENING OF ORCHESTRATED RAG AT THE SMITHSONIAN

By Stephen Allen Whealton

Martin Williams, director of the jazz program for the Smithsonian Institution, has assembled a year's worth of programs which have done much to establish Washington, D.C. as a center of performed jazz in keeping with its role as our nation's capital and appropriate to the size of the black population here. Already this year, Mr. Williams has brought Ornette Coleman, the Modern Jazz Quartet, and Lee Konitz to the Performing Arts series; he has scheduled Sonny Rollins to appear on Sunday, March 11. A few weeks ago, perhaps the most singular concert in the series took place. For this, Boston's Gunther Schuller brought a group of performers from the New England Conservatory. They performed works by Scott Joplin as orchestrated during Joplin's lifetime, perhaps by Joplin himself. In addition, Schuller chose to throw some interesting light upon ragtime by including three tangential pieces; one by American composer Charles Ives, one by French composer Claude Debussy and one by American composer Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton.

Eight of Scott Joplin's early ragtime piano pieces were performed in arrangements for twelve instruments; a trumpet, clarinet, trombone, piccolo (doubling flute), tuba, piano, drums, two violins, a viola, cello, and a string bass. Schuller adapted the original scorings to fit this ensemble. The concert represented the first Washington, D.C. performance of these old arrangements, all contained in a book called the *Red Back Book of Rags*, which has remained lost or ignored from around 1915 to the present.

These authentic arrangements of authentic black music from the early years of the present century were played and conducted with considerable feeling. I am not expert enough to judge how idiomatic or how accurate the interpretations were, but they sounded fine to me. There was doubtlessly a considerable amount of care, fine musicianship, love and, above all, fun involved in the playing. I found it, too, to be an experience of joy unalloyed by any distractions or flaws worthy of notice.

Schuller presented considerable commentary not only in the afternoon's rehearsal, but also in the evening's actual concert. He conveyed a feeling for ragtime by characterizing it musically as well as socially. One important point that he made struck me particularly: he noted that ragtime was first of all a banjo-oriented music made by black men in the frontier areas of our country at the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century. These rural musicians moved to the cities and began playing on pianos in various places of public entertainment. Several of these black composers were rather sophisticated musically; that is, they were exposed to classical and semi-classical musics of that period and to the white-man's popular music as well.

While ragtime lasted, it was the first major example of black men's music tailored to fit white men's tastes. Ragtime music adapted itself to commercialities in a whole gamut of ways ranging from Joplin's way – which was to emulate some of the classical music he knew – to the common practice of playing rags fast, jerkily, and with more fireworks than musicality.

Schuller used contrast to strengthen the impact of his concert. He included three kinds of ragtime offshoots to place the Joplin pieces in context. First was Charles Ives' *The See'r*, a minute-long essay in complexity which was primarily based on ragtime. Ives was a visionary classical composer who knew as early as 1913, when he wrote this short piece, that popular music was a noble and worthy source for artistic inspiration. The piece provided a striking sidelight.

Debussy's much more straightforward *Golliwog's Cakewalk* showed how ragtime influenced probably the most revolutionary composer of his day. The Frenchman adapted rhythms and melodic forms in a totally personal way, making an amalgam which is at once natural and synthetic. It, also, was a pleasing aside.

Jelly Roll Morton's *Grandpa's Spells* showed what came out of ragtime. Schuller explained how the freer rhythms and improvisatory format of the later piece set it apart from its more rigid ragtime precursor. The audience particularly enjoyed this piece.

Overall, the music and the playing were exceptionally well received by the audience, both at the rehearsal, which was almost packed, and at the concert itself, which was sold out. The rehearsal audience forced one encore and the concert audience, three. It was an evening to be treasure and remembered.

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Schuller and his ensemble have recorded much of this program for Angel records, and the disc ought to be out within a year. Other ragtime discs of merit are limited to the original piano versions of the pieces. Yet there are several of these, and among them they give a very fine representation of Joplin's work, in particular.

Formost, there is Max Morath's set of two discs (Vanguard VSD 39/40). This pair of recordings embody what is, to my taste, the best approach to ragtime playing now commonly available. The playing is idiomatic, joyful, and sound to my ears. On one of the two records, Morath has himself accompanied by banjo, guitar, and string bass. The music seems to work well with piano alone and with the small group as well. Twelve Joplin pieces are featured on these records, along with four by Joseph Foster Lamb and three by James Scott. Together, these three men wrote the original masterpieces of classic ragtime. Lamb and Scott were Joplin's two pupils of greatest achievement, and their music stands with his at the pinnacle of ragtime. Lamb, a white man, lived until 1960; long enough to see the beginnings of the present revival of interest in the music he had written and loved during the 'teens.

A different, and somewhat controversial, approach to ragtime piano playing is that represented by Joshua Rifkin, whose two Nonesuch discs have done more than anything else to accelerate and feed the current ragtime craze. Rifkin plays the rags, limiting himself strictly to Joplin, rather as if they were classical music. The result is not, however, the cold or dry mechanistic or totally inappropriate mismatch that one might imagine. Rifkin's Joplin is probably distant from the real thing, but it has its own value and "rightness," artificial though it is. Rifkin plays with taste, and his approach, given that it is classical, is exactly appropriate to the music as written. His two recordings are numbers H-71248 and H-71264. For anyone coming to ragtime from a strong interest in classical music, particularly French music such as that of Debussy or Satie, Rifkin's playing is a perfect crossover.

William Bolcom's disc (Nonesuch H-71257) occupies a middle-of-the-road position between Rifkin's classicism and Morath's idiomatic playing. Bolcom's programming is more diverse and he includes osme of his own, recently written, rags. Far from being a disadvantage, however, this bit of apparent vanity provides one of the most pleasant pieces on the record, Bolcom's *Graceful Ghost*, written in 1970 in memory of his father. Delicate and tender, the piece captures the mood of authentic ragtime.

Biograph Records, Inc., has provided two discs of rags recorded in stereo from piano rolls. The research and technical preparation for these discs is impressive, but the actualization is less successful. Notably, there is an annoying and intrusively distracting tinny sound in the all-Joplin disc called "Volume 2." In each case, of course, the listener is forced to bear with the extreme limitations of piano rolls. Music recorded from piano rolls cannot include variations of loudness, nor can they begin to include the performer's range of expressive playing. Anything sounds mechanistic when played on a piano roll, and these discs are not exceptions to this rule. Nevertheless, they include many Joplin pieces not otherwise available, and for a listener genuinely interested in the music, they give a real idea of how it was played in Joplin's lifetime. The first disc features one side, ostensibly of Joplin's own performances of his works, only one of which seems certain to have been by Joplin himself. The other side features William Axtman playing less interesting music, but including the familiar *Twelfth Street Rag*. This is Biograph BLP 1006Q, while Volume 2 is Biograph BLP 1008Q. Both are recommended with stated reservations.

One last recording deserves mention. It is a rather strange disc, having appeared at various times on various labels, domestic and foreign. It was apparently assembled and recorded by a Dutch musicologist for the English Riverside label, which issued it in several forms. Recently, I bought it in an Italian pressing. It features old 78rpm performances of piano rolls. It may appear again in some unknown form. Watch for it, for it alone seems to retain from the ragtime period itself a few bits of authentic and totally idiomatic music. The sound is uniformly bad, and the playing on some of the pieces is likewise awful. But on a few of the pieces, a quality can be heard which strikes me with unprecedented force. Somehow, I feel it to be a remnant of something unique and otherwise lost in our modern attempt to resussitate this lost black-man's art-form. Find the disc on English Riverside or Italian Joker. It is all-Joplin and it includes the real thing. (Joker SM 3097).

SPLIT ENDS –
The Move – (United Artists)

Reviewed by Bruce Rosenstein

Oddly enough, *Split Ends* serves both as an introduction to The Move for the uninitiated, and a farewell to the group as a cohesive unit. It is not a new album, it is just what the title implies: material pulled together from various places into a whole. The ends in question are seven of 10 tracks from their last official LP, *Message From the Country*, released late summer, 1971, and five songs released as singles which have never appeared on an album.

All of the songs represent the last stage of The Move's developement, which began in late 1970 after the departure of singer Carl Wayne, who left the band to sing show tunes for the Englebert Humperdinck set. Wayne was replaced by pianist-singer Jeff Lynne, who was in a Move-like group called The Idle Race. Jeffed proved a most worthwhile addition, for not only could he play delightful piano, but his voice fit right in with the group's material and he wrote some excellent songs. In early 1971, the came up with a strong album, *Looking On*, and followed that up with the similar *Message From. . . .*

In between those two albums came the release of a single, the first of three singles in a year and a half, all hits in England, all bombs here. The song, a Roy Wood composition called "Tonight," has to be one of the top ten Move songs. But "Tonight" is still so powerful that it gives me chills whenever I listen.

It has Wood's typical bizarro, yet to-the-point lyrics, and though it is predominantly acoustic, it has a relentless drive that few songs can match. Wood is jsut strumming some simple things, but he seems to be attacking the guitar in his hammering way like a man possessed, and though there is a rhythm section and later the use of Wood's electric guitar, it is that acoustic guitar which carries this song. It is unquestionably one of the two best songs on this album, the other being another single, "Do Ya," but let's not get ahead our ourselves.

Looking On, *Message From. . .*, and "Tonight" were released in America all on Capitol. The group's first album remains unreleased here, while their second, *Shazam*, came out on A&M. Several of their better singles came out on A&M though they did a job of keeping it a secret that the CIA could admire. After *Message*, though, they remained on Harvest in England, The Move moved to United Artists in this country. The first release was a single of "Chinatown" and "Down on the Bay" both of which are included on *Split Ends*. "Chinatown" is a Wood song which is reminiscent of the early Move sound, a catchy, and tasteful pop sound. "Down on the Bay" was written by Lynne and featured Wood knocking out Chuck Berry riffs in what turned out to be a preview of things to come in their next single release several months later.

At this time, late 1971, Move had for all intents and purposes broken up. This meant that they were no longer performing on stage, but would still release singles for a time. Though they cannot seem to get a hit in America, practically anything they do in England goes to the top of the charts. That's why when you tell someone from England that The Move has an underground reputation in America, they just have to laugh because it's the exact oppostie over there. In return for continuing to record potential hits, their record companies agreed to indulge their appetite for forming new groups. The first was the Electric Light Orchestra, a classical-rock group started by Wood and Lynne and supplemented by other musicians. Their first LP was released a year ago and it was quite good. However, Wood decided to stop working with that group last summer, and handed the reins to Jeff Lynne so he could start his own group called Wizzard, who recently released their first single, a Move-sounding thing called "Ball Park Incident." And somewhere lies the unreleased tapes of a Roy Wood solo LP, *Boulders*, which supposedly wasn't released because Roy couldn't find a suitable cover. . .

What will probably be the final Move single was released last fall, "California Man" and "Do Ya." Wood wrote "California Man" a hard-pounder in the Jerry Lee Lewis tradition with him and Jeff trading off vocals. But the biggie was "Do Ya." This was the closest The Move ever had to an American hit. But it still didn't do much. This, like "Tonight," is a masterpiece. Jeff Lynne wrote it positively his best song, and strangely enough it sounds like a Wood composition. I would be bold enough to say that "Do Ya" synthesizes all that is/was good and exciting about late 60's - early 70's rock music. It starts off with a thunderous riff out of the Lou Reed songbook played by Wood, and then Roy's voice comes in singing the surrealistic lyrics. The chorus is exquisite, sung by Wood and Lynne. When you hear it, you'll see what I mean when I say it sounds like a joint effort among The Move, The Velvet Underground, and The Who.

That takes care of the singles on *Split Ends*. Most Move fans (there are more than you think) are familiar with *Message From the Country* because they have it, but for those who haven't heard it, there is very hard rock like "Until Your Mama's Gone," and "Ella James," a soft and pretty "No Time," and the inbetween represented by the title cut, which has the best harmonies, and "The Words of Aaron." "It Wasn't My Idea" has Wood's surrealistic lyrics nearly getting out of hand. Any song that starts off with "People throwing pennies in my soup". . . He can be a bit much at times, but it's easy to overlook. Three songs have been deleted from the Capitol edition, but you're not missing a hell of a lot by not having them, except possibly for drummer Bev Bevan's tribute to Elvis, "Don't Mess Me Up."

Although the present for Wood-Lynne lies in The Electric Light Orchestra and Wizzard, *Split Ends* shows you most of the good stuff from the past two years and it is a golden opportunity to get those songs which were singles. And no rock lover should live without "Tonight" and "Do Ya." They'll make it big someday, and I wouldn't be surprised if *Split Ends* were the reason.

THE ARRIVAL OF BOBBY JONES
– Cobblestone

Reviewed by Richard Harrington

Bobby Jones has been making his reputation the last two years playing tenor sax for Charles Mingus. His first solo album is aptly titled and on it he shines on both tenor and soprano saxes. With the help of some top sidemen (Charles McPherson on alto, Jaki Byard on piano and Richard Davis on bass). Jones went into the studio with only the shells of six numbers and trusted both his playmates and his own sense of improvisation. As a result, the album has that great feel of people really cooking. Two homages stand out as different textrues – the raucously paced "Thanks to Trane" and the smoother "Blues for the Brown Buddha," for Charlie Parker (Coltrane and Parker being Jones' idols). Jones also develops a highly lyrical soprano on "Ballad for Two Sons," as well as a delicious sense of humor on "As the Crow Flies." Byard and McPherson contribute several solos, and the whole album works in a successful way that few first solo albums of any kind are able to do.

NATURAL ILLUSIONS –
Bobby Hutcherson – (Blue Note)

Bobby Hutcherson is a good vibes player who has gotten some bad advice. Someone told him he could take old standards like "Sophisticated Lady" and "The Thrill Is Gone," lush them up with strings, and still create a jazz empatico. It doesn't work. The strings are alternately flaccid or overbearing, and only one cut (Hutcherson's own "When You Are Near") is aided one dime's worth by their presence. Hutcherson himself doesn't seem to quite know what he wants, confining his playing to a very safe, middle-of-the-road, Muzak approach. It is to be hoped that by the next album, things will be cleared up.

R.H.

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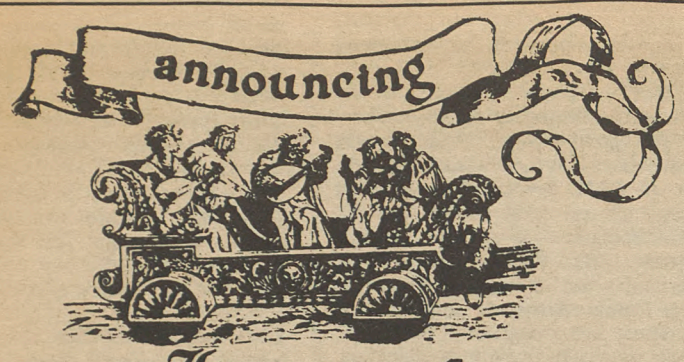

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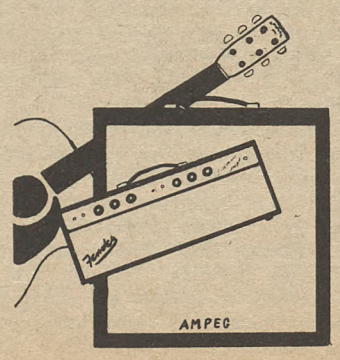

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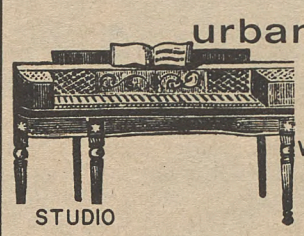

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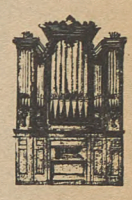

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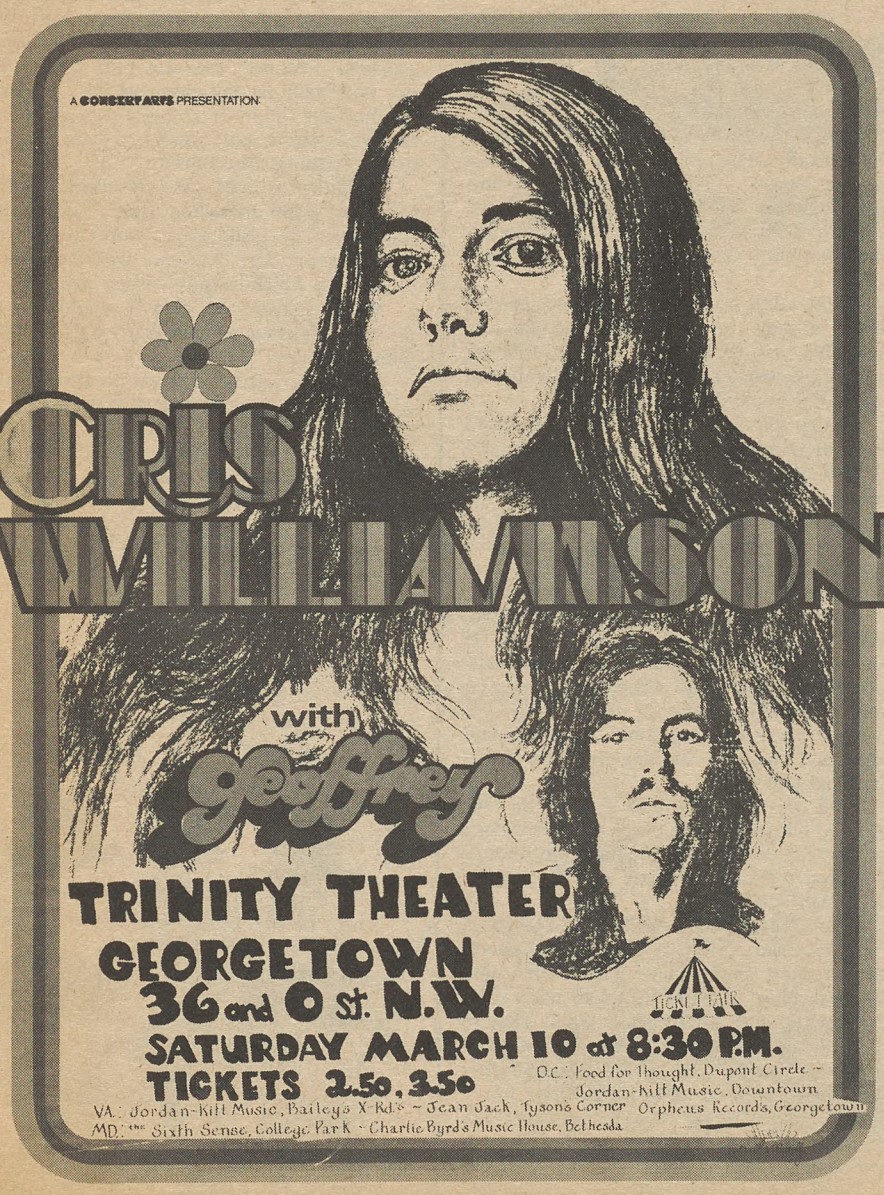
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Rainy Day Unemployment Blues

By Hobs Allen

The low rumble of thunder caused Wilbur Rand to wake up. It was pouring outside.

He struggled against the restraining warmth of bedclothes and the beckoning, narcotic urge of half recalled dreams, as dull, opaque light filtered in through the drawn, yellow-brown curtains. Morning had come, and with it, no sign of promise.

Vaguely he supposed he had hoped for something else by way of weather: the bright transluscence of early summer of a few weeks back; the busy morning noise of birds foraging the tiny back garden; anything but rain.

But raining it was and with no indication of letup; the gutteral horizon-jarring soughing of the thunder again impinged. Normal people would be getting up to go to work, he thought to himself, automatically visualizing the fumbling process of putting on his pants, trying to chose a tie. Wilbur had a hard time re-associating the pattern of old morning routines.

He guessed he wasn't normal. Briefly he was aware of the comfort of the warm, comatose form beside him. His wife, comfortably burrowed, unmoving. An immense temptation pervaded, to huddle in close to her body, close his eyes, let the room disappear into an envelope, however transient, of consciouslessness.

He forced himself awake, slowly reestablishing points of contact with his reality as he contemplated the grainy whiteness of the low, papered ceiling. (The damned painters had papered the ceiling too, in the absence of his instructions before they moved in. Eighty-six dollard extra it cost. It was still too much to take.)

The drumming rain, on another day, would have gradually acquired a background supportive rhythm. Generally, Wilbur loved rain. His gentle wife would stand, arms around him, at the window and they both would contemplate the deluge, the water gush from the nearby rainspout hissing and wildly splattering below.

Wilbur remembered that truly he liked the temporary and utterly isolated feeling, the inexplicable simple pleasure of being dry, inside, with her, while all the world without dissolved in liquid.

Today was different because today was ***the*** day. They would be hungry in a week, maybe ten days. Wilbur Rand had to get a job.

Out of bed, he plodded over to the big, ground-level window. He parted the curtain a crack, peered through with two eyes and a nose, taking in the day. It was very wet. The small back yard was swimming and the bluebells of Mrs. Horowitz upstairs were closed tight against the water's battering.

Despite the rain, the yard was a riot of summer green, of renewal, of sturdy foliage. In Mr. Feiler's back garden, cabbages and beans prospered.

He turned and surveyed the small, dim-lit ground-floor apartment. His heart tuned its half-perceived, metabolistic beat to the throb of the water rolling off the rooves, and Wilbur slowly began to function.

First he activated his mind. He shifted out of subconscious, whirred briefly in neutral, and proceeded haphazardly into contemplation of tackling the impending torture.

Here I am, 28 years-old, a degree in *English*, for christ's sake, broke, and it's raining. No job for two months, nobody really too interested in my resumes, no dough in the bank for the upcoming rent and car payments. A real bummer.

Reluctantly he surveyed the geography of his recent past, with a lack of encouraging results. Right now, he guessed, he'd have to call himself a failed newspaper reporter. (If you called interviewing furniture factory owners and department store sales clerks, and researching at the public library for the city editor, and writing facile, glib features news reporting.)

Before that, he had been a failed salesman, the only salesman for Crowell's Children's Classics to sell not a single set of books in seven straight weeks of trying.

Before that he had been in the army. Wilbur smiled manically at the memory. He had often marvelled at the totality of disillusionment the army was able to induce. He had discussed it with his wife. He pondered the irony that allowed the bland, middle-class American public school system – so dedicated to the inculcating of idealism – to so unfeelingly spit out its male produce into the unregenerative cynical incompetence manifested during a three-year hitch in the United States Army.

My life, grinned Wilbur Rand with mildly bitter contempt as he went into the bathroom. Twisting the hot water tap and grimacing, he confronted the quickly steamed-over mirror in a by-now familiar race to shave the obdurate black bristles of his despairingly heavy beard. As usual, it was a losing contest.

Wetting his hands with cold water, he wiped the mirror. Sometimes he would catch himself watching himself at precisely this disturbing moment; razor in hand, face half-lathered, with the trickles of water on the doused mirror warping his features. On days when things were OK, he would mug it up and say something heartening. Hello handsome.

Today he didn't say anything. Uncharacteristically, at the last minute before leaving the bathroom, he rubbed his face with Hai-Karate, the after-shave that drives 'em wild.

Feeling anything but wild, he thought unenthusiastically of soft-boiled eggs. Wilbur tried to select a successful-looking suit, which was hard since he only had three and one of them was old. His wife was stirring now. Outside it was still raining.

Their eyes met as he was knotting his tie. Hello, she said. Then, Wilbur, don't wear *that* tie. It doesn't *go*.

"Well, which one *does* go?" he said exasperatingly.

"With the shirt you've got on, nothing goes. How can you wear a striped shirt with a plaid suit?"

Wilbur had hoped she wouldn't notice. He always told himself it was, after all, a very quiet stripe and the dark, corn-yellow shirt was the best one, the newest one, he owned. He reflected how many times just the crisp *feel* of the slim-cut shirt had given him an aura of confidence.

But, as was often the case, she was right. They had played out the same ritual dialogue before. Mentally he made a note to buy solid suits in the future, and changed shirt and tie.

"Did you decide if you were coming?" he asked his wife, who had drawn on her housecoat (the one with black floral patterns; she called it her "Magic Trees robe") and was heating water in the narrow kitchen. She had wanted to stop at the gynecologist while Wilbur was job hunting.

"I guess I am," she said uncertainly. "The note at his office said Dr. Pollack would be back from vacation today, and my pills run out Wednesday, so I guess I'd better go. I hate those examinations."

Wilbur made toast, spread the margarine methodically. He mixed some Tang in the cocktail shaker – seldom used for martinis anymore, now that Fred was able to score grass for them so cheaply – and set the table, while his wife made the tea and eggs. Soft boiled.

"That rain's not going to let up," he said glumly as they ate. His wife tried to help him remember his dream; she enjoyed sharing dreams, the wierder the better. Usually, he did too, but he couldn't remember today.

Putting on his raincoat, Wilbur noticed that the seams were starting to fade and realized that it was getting old and worn. He thought to ask his wife about getting it re-waterproofed, but wondered if it would be worth it. He anticipated getting soaked if he had to depend on the raincoat for protection in this weather. Luckily, he had his umbrella.

They were silent as he drove downtown. Wilbur couldn't think of anything to say. He concentrated on the wheel, trying unsuccessfully to avoid the huge wakes splashed up by trailer trucks speeding on the freeway. He dropped his wife at the clinic in the mall and continued on alone, thinking about the things Fred had told him.

Fred was Wilbur's best friend. He was going to school at City College for his Master's on the G.I. Bill, and for the past four months had been working part-time as a department store night-watchman.

"Sure, they'll have something for you," Fred had said. "They're the State employment center, aren't they? That's their job. But remember, don't be afraid to talk a little tough with 'em. That's what I did. They're just bureaucrats, he said with scorn. Probably put there because they couldn't find another job. They hemmed around at first, but I slammed my hand on the table and told 'em I wanted to work and they had to find me something."

According to Fred, the guy to see was named Schwartz. He handled jobs for college grads.

The Municipal Building was in a nondescript block. It loomed against the rain like a fortress, and Wilbur could already guess the halls would echo cavernously as he walked through them.

Parking had been the standard hassle. He found a spot a block away and splashed back up the sidewalk, chaffing that his new burgundy-hued shoes were getting soaked.

Schwartz's office was on the third floor and Schwartz was in. He was a dyspeptic older man, Kafkaesque and grey. Even his face was grey. It was depressing.

"I need a job," said Wilbur. "I have a B.A. in English, class of '65, and I'm working right now as a newspaperman (he lied), but I really am looking for something different."

"What do you mean 'different,'" said Schwartz. "You gotta be specific. First you gotta fill out these forms, though."

Wilbur filled out the forms. "I was wondering about teaching," he said vaguely. "I don't have a certificate yet, but I was thinking about a private school, or maybe a school for the retarded kids or something. I'll be taking some courses at night, of course."

"We don't handle teaching here," said Schwartz. "You gotta see the school board on that. But my understanding is that you need a teaching degree. How about something in insurance? There are several name firms that have filed a standing request with us for men with degrees. Selling insurance is a solid business."

"Well, uh, I don't think so," said Wilbur. "You see, I've already done some selling and I don't really think it's my line. I. . . ."

"What about accounting, have you ever had any accounting experience?"

"No, not really. That is, I studied economics in college, but not bookkeeping. I don't think that would be too good either. What I really need is something like job counseling, I guess. I heard from a friend you could give me that service here, too."

"Job counseling has moved down to some vacated offices at City Hall," said Schwartz. "But then I believe they ran out of funds last month. But here's the address anyway. You can check. The main areas we have on file here, right now, are for college trained men interested in sales, or with business and accounting majors. We don't really have too much in your area I'm afraid. You could try some of the big department stores, of course. They have a standing request for us to refer young college men to them for management training. I've got a list of addresses, but you'll have to contact them yourself."

"Well, really, I was hoping to find something where I could begin as soon as possible, and I heard you could arrange everything for me right here," said Wilbur.

"Normally, we might be able to give you a little more help," said Schwartz. "But you know how jobs are these days. The local economy just isn't creating jobs right now. But you could try my colleague Mr. Davidson on the first floor. He arranges manual labor, and you might get something there til you find something more suitable."

So Wilbur talked to Mr. Davidson, too. He could get a job unloading trucks, said Davidson. Or, if he could go to work tomorrow, there was a dry cleaners that had called looking for a pick-up and delivery man.

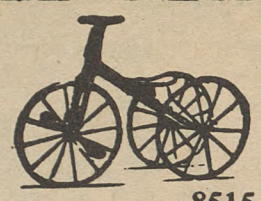
Wilbur said thanks, that he would have to do some checking around and would be back later in the day.

Slowly he wandered down the hall, casually reading the posters and bulletin boards at the head of the stairs.

"Shit," he said slowly to himself.

Outside, when he opened the tall front door, the rain was falling as hard as ever. Wilbur picked his way to his car. There was no one else out on the street.

THE BICYCLE PLACE



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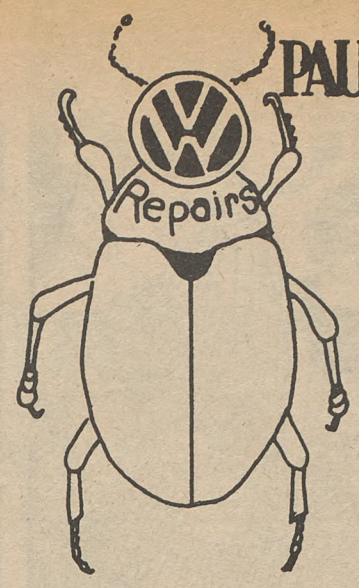

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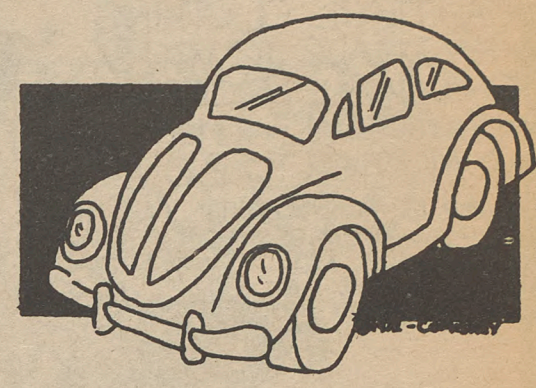

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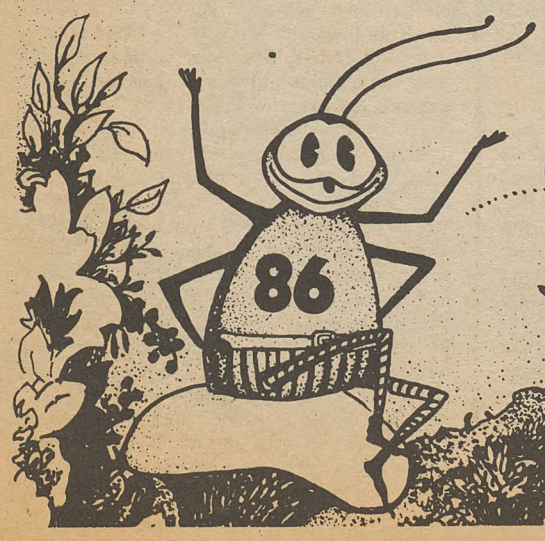

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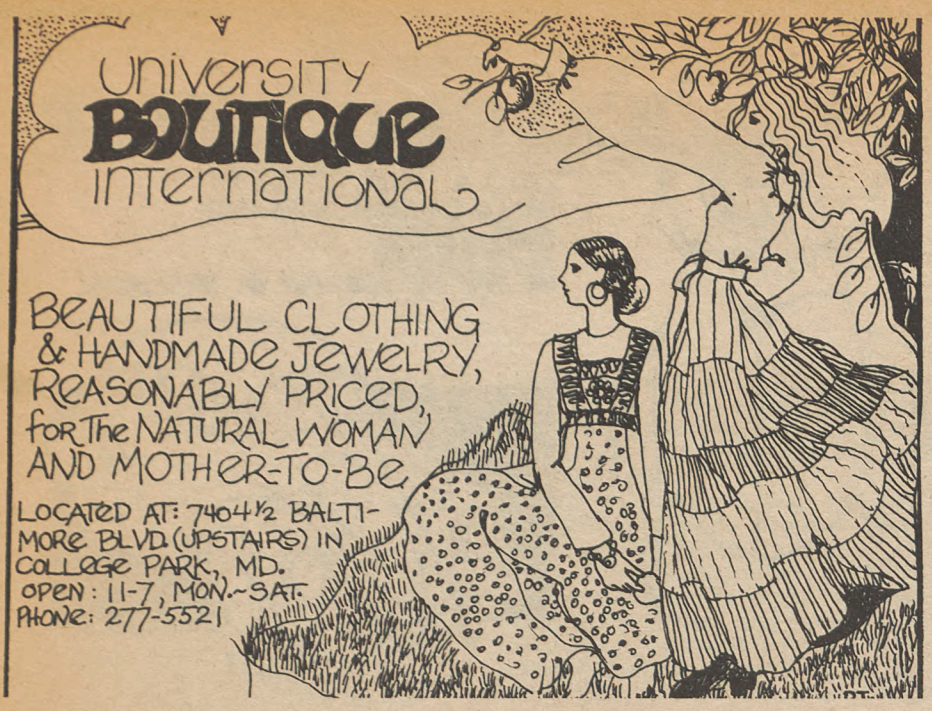
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PERFORMANCE

THE ENCLAVE
Washington Theatre Club

Reviewed by Jay Alan Quantrill

There have been many, many plays about the problems of the young, about the up-and-coming generation searching for meaning and purpose in this terrible world. There have been some, but not nearly as many in our youth-oriented society, about the middle-aged discontent. But I can remember no play as funny and painful, so sarcastic and yet brazen as Arthur Laurents' newest play which the Washington Theatre Club – with profound pleasure – is presenting. The play is called *The Enclave*, remember the name, *The Enclave*: be sure you see this one. It entertains and says something. It is vivid and brutal, hilarious and honest! It is an immensely intelligent play, well written by an experienced and proven author. *The Enclave* is unquestionably the best play we've seen this season. It may well be the best new play of the past few seasons.

You might call *The Enclave* a sort of middle-aged moonchildren, but here there is more meat on the bones of the playwright's carcass, probably because his characters are older, not necessarily any more wiser, but certainly more worn. The characters consist of nine people, four couples (two we don't see) and Ben. Ben is a homosexual and he wants to bring his boyfriend into the Enclave. The Enclave is a shelter the nine friends have devised for themselves as protection against the battles and bruises of the modern world. But, just as many of us know things about our friends which we chose to ignore, the forced admission of Ben's sexual preference brings out all the skeletons from the closet and, suddenly, these people are forced to face the agony of their lives. They have been friends as a defense against themselves and now they find that friends can become a threat, particularly when those friends refuse to allow you to be what you have agreed to be within the group. The play held the audience in rapt silence as the masks were drawn off and we see the characters as they were, as we have seen our friends to be, but never admitted. It's the kind of play which – if anything – will create the kind of discussion which may, in turn, help people come to terms both with their age and with their own selves.

The acting is superb, nearly flawless. Headed by Hal Linden and Peg Murray, this group of actors is unsurpassed in competence and talent. They work well together, and have been directed by the author of the play with a sense of taut finesse which is welcomed at the Theatre Club. Though the play seems to get off to a weak and rather slow beginning, it soon picks up not steam, but a blasting, searing, incisive kind of thrust that, though the first act curtain leaves you wondering what will be the outcome (as few plays do, nowadays), the audience goes back for more knowing they won't be bored.

Technically, the show is competent, but not inspired. The setting is almost a dismal failure. The set designer has, for the second time this season, succeeded in filling the stage with the barest excuse for a set, and the execution of his designs kept pace, qualitywise. However, after you are over the shock of the setting, it doesn't matter; Arthur Laurents has staged the scene changes by the cast beautifully, in character and in fact with a sense of continuity that is amazing.

The Enclave, following the soon-to-re-open *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men* (at the O Street Theatre) makes two in a row and signals a complete turnabout for the Theatre Club in mid-season. Hurray for them! *The Enclave* is a beautiful play, filled with wit and honesty, charm and pain; it's vibrantly alive. I recommend it very highly!!

THE PLAYWRIGHT'S THEATRE OF WASHINGTON

The Playwright's Theatre of Washington is a small group. It is pretentiously unpretentious with grand aspirations and the potential of achieving maybe 50 per cent of them. But even at 50 per cent, they'll be more than worth the effort. The Playwright's Theatre actually is the least pretentious part of what is known as the American Society of Theatre Arts (ASTA), which is about as "highfalooting" as you can get. That any group of young thespians would call themselves the American Society of Theatre Arts when they've hardly begun to understand what the theatre is all about is ostentation of the first order. But if such grandiloquence helps them get their jollies. . . okay!!

More important are the products of such an organization. ASTA doesn't sit there and preen, it works – it supports the Playwright's Theatre, which is made up of the members of ASTA, for the most part. It's all rather incestuous, to be sure, but there are other functions. Like the dance workshop – this I've not experienced, so no comment – and the puppet theatre (which belongs to the wife of oen of the founding members which, while not incestuous, is at best nepotism.) So merrily they role along, and what's the point of all this you may ask. Well, it's just this.

All of the above notwithstanding, the Playwright's Theatre is a success. It is working and reaping results. It is providing an outlet for playwrights and actors – which in this day of fem lib includes the old fashioned concept of actresses. And it has in the past few months shown Washington's more adventurous theatregoers that there are decent playwrights in our own back yard. We don't have to go to New York or San Francisco or London or Warsaw to find works worthy of our playhouses.

This is not to say that any Shakespeares or even Albees or even, if you will, Shepherds (Sam, for those who don't know) have been discovered. But there have been some writers with that special knack, that have had a chance to see their plays live. From these experiences, new Albees and Ortons are developed.

Out of the six plays (all short ones) thus far produced on two separate bills, two works stand out as demonstrations of true playwriting talent. The first was *Medium Pizza with Mushrooms*, by Eric MacFarland, a two-character play, about a guy and a girl breaking up. The script investigates what there was to break up and, if anything, whether or not it was worth it all. The style is sarcastic and funny, sometimes self-consciously so. I would describe the work as early Neil Simon sifted through the mind of Murray Schisgal viewing the world in a rather Bruce Jay Friedman-esque telescope. And that's a pretty weird combination! What the play suffers from most is a lack of cutting, something all new playwrights have to learn to do extensively but with discrimination. If they can't do it, then they have to find a director or producer or just general advisor who can. But with all the excesses left in, MacFarland's pen has caught the verbal style of his characters and recorded them with loving, albeit indulgent, understanding. Yet he needs to find a focus for his – or should I say, his characters – energies. Suspense is an important part of the theatre. Not the Spillane type, but that which keeps an audience guessing. If not about the plot, then about the characters, and the whys and where-fores of their relationship. A playwright should not be in a hurry to explain his people too soon. And that's where the art comes in: when is "not too soon"?

A play which succeeded in this regard was on the second bill and by far the best discovery of the Playwright's Theatre. It's a play by T.J. Camp III, *The Return of Captain D.B. Amatucci*, which takes place in the morgue of an Army unit in Vietnam. The morgue is manned by four hardened soldiers who have learned to live among the broken bones, the arms torn from torsos and the four-fingered hands of the fighters in their war. . . hardened, but still vulnerable. Into this situation, at clean-up time, comes a fellow soldier, but one not accustomed to the practicalities of life in a morgue. He has been assigned the task of bringing a newly discovered coffin to the morgue for. . . well, for whatever one does with a coffin that is full, but only recently discovered. When opened, the coffin is found to contain the remains, gruesome as they are, of Capt. D.B. Amatucci, the seventh officer to be shot in Vietnam. His coffin was lost soon after his death, and everyone from the green berets to the CIA has been searching for it. The four morgue-workers toast the remains and seek to have their as-yet unjaded delivery boy join them, but he refuses. They prevail, but he turns his toast into a jeering comment on the four. It is at this point that the script becomes obtuse, and ends with an obviously derisive comment on the ways of success and money-making. Playwright Camp leaves us hanging. We are wondering what was his point. Besides showing, and nicely, these men and this situation, where is he going? Camp has drawn characters by contrasts and in relation to their work, without preachments or pseudo-psych-jobs but he left *us* hanging. Only once or twice did he forget to use the blue pencil, but then, at the end, when he's got us all on his wavelength and we're ready for something. . . we're given a pompously symbolic reference to

Continued on Page 14

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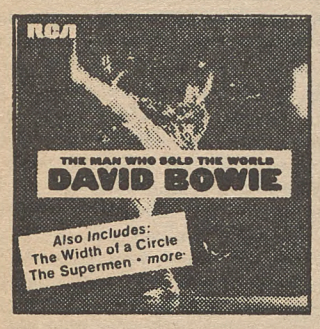

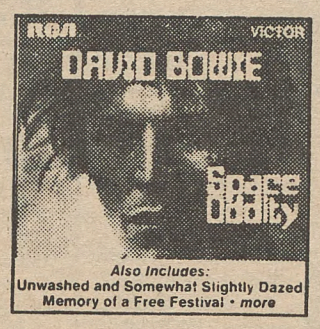

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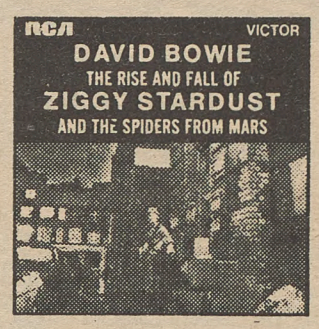

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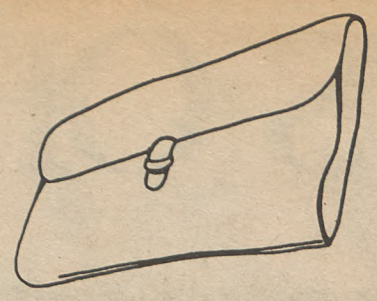

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PERFORMANCE Continued from Page 12

Mickey Spillane writing his mysteries in three short days and making a million and snap: the lights are out and the cast is in for their bows. I know it means something to Mr. Camp, but what? I'm sure you can explain it all very logically, but it just didn't make it over the footlights at the time of performance. I don't want to be spoon-fed, but then I'm not looking for puzzles either. Give me an ending and I'll be happy.

And, for godsakes, keep on writing! Messrs MacFarland and Camp are two of the best out of the many the Playwright's Theatre has presented. Lucy Kennedy's *Miss Harolde to the Dark Tower Came* had some delightful moments, but was twice the length it should have been, or maybe only half of what was supposed to be happening ever happened, I'm not sure. The rest are notable for having been done, if nothing else. If you haven't been to the miniscule cupboard they call a theatre, you don't know what intimate is. They can't seat parties larger than 25, so don't get the whole gang together. Just go. See what they're doing. Soon. Who knows what bard they're likely to unearth?

J.A.Q.

A LOOK AT THE FIFTIES
Arena Stage

This is the season for nostalgia, it really is! All through the late summer, fall, and winter months, an amateur musical about the 50's packed the houses at the old O Street Theatre of the Washington Theatre Club. Next month the National will be playing the touring company of *Grease* to be followed quickly by the pace-setter of nostalgia pieces. *No, No, Nanette*. Well, this month – and it's already been extended for an extra week – the Arena Stage is presenting its entry into the nostalgia parade. The musical is called *A Look at the Fifties* and true to form, Arena has found a delightfully rousing and raucous musical that pulls no punches and bars no holds. *A Look at the Fifties* is not merely nostalgia, it is a critical look at the 50's. It doesn't merely spoof, it shows that decade of America's loss of starry-eyed innocence for what it really was. *A Look at the Fifties* sympathetically, but lovingly, and sometimes cynically, focuses in on the turmoil under the veneer of morality and propriety. For all this, it is to be praised; congratulations to you all, it is fun and awesomely truthful.

What it is not, is a finished, highly crafted piece of art. That doesn't mean the show isn't artful. It even qualifies as artistic. But it is art of the primitive style. The songs are not show tunes, they aren't even singable in many cases, much less hummable. They are usually pleasant, sometimes brassy, occasionally moving, but often pretentious and unruly. The melodies may or may not express the same feeling as the lyrics which range from silly to poetic. The script doesn't go anywhere, it just sits there making comment after comment on the life and times of those who suffered through the 50's, and those who found them fun. The characters are usually one-dimensional types, but then, such is the necessity of such a scheme. But for all these nits, I'd pick this one over many shows I've seen. It's a diamond in the rough and you can see there is something there, you're not dazzled and blinded by the glare of its gloss.

The actors are mostly new to Arena and are perhaps the most convincing group of players I've seen in a musical yet. This is no troupe of Broadway babes with plastic smiles and brassy voices. They do smile and they sing well, but with a sense of reality which is welcomed in the musical theatre. Maureen Sadusk and Frank Coppola stand out but not much beyond the energetic and well-cast company. Only Lee Guilliatt, playing Sister Mary seemed unequal to her role.

The author, lyricist, composer of *A Look at the Fifties* is Al Carmines, a priest who has been writing musicals for off-Broadway theatres for years. He's won many awards and, for the wisdom that allows Washington to see this show, we must again thank Arena Stage. Here is suburbia's answer to *West Side Story*, a gangling, outrageous expose of the fifties recreated with humor, compassion, and a knowing smirk. Don't miss it; it's selling out rapidly and it's only here for a short time.

J.A.Q.

Continued from Page 5

maze to the cheese even though they've done it month after month – they cannot find direction. And if you keep them propagandized and fearful long enough they will look for order. Anywhere. You know where people look for order? In Nazi Germany they looked to the army for order. Through all of this, the people have become de-sensitized, brutalized. They can look at picture after picture of television of children being napalmed and they are not moved. We are all Jefferson's children, but they're jsut scared.

I then mentioned the painful lack of people like him, other satirists who should be doing some of the same type of work. He is essentially alone, political satirists abound in print, but there are precious few performers who operate with the intensity that a Mort Sahl does.

People are afraid, they're afraid of being penalized. Some guy who makes $125 or $150 a week is afraid of losing his job, and that's disgraceful. Someone has to raise questions. Why don't the newsmen, why just me? The irony of all this is when Jack Kennedy was killed the guys that killed him were coming for all of us 15 minutes later. You win nothing by keeping quiet, or covering your ears, because none of us is immune to evil or facism.

* * * * * * * * *

That was about the end of the interview; by one o'clock in the morning neither of us was in decent enough shape to continue. Mort's stay in Washington is virtually ended. He's leaving for New York and other commitments later in the day. Both of us are still backstage, moving slowly, but making progress towards leaving.

Just as I'm about to get my body out the door Mort turns to me and says; "You know, Mike, what's really frightening? What really scares me? It's the feeling that no one's listening; that no one really listens. There doesn't seem to be anybody to talk to, and that's the worst thing of all."

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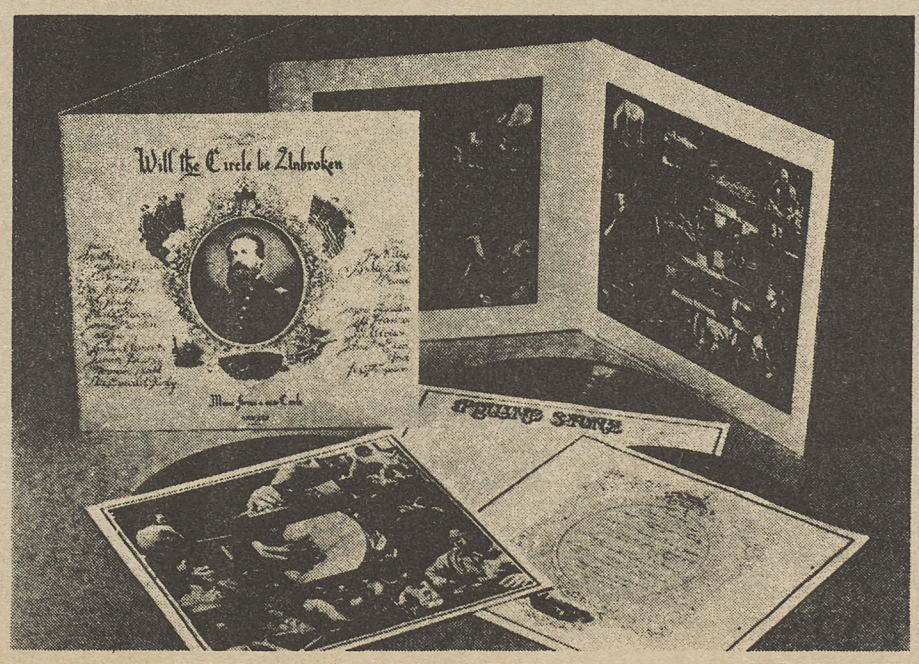

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Annandale, VA

GIANT MUSIC
109 E. Broad Street
Falls Church, VA

HARMONY HUT
7417 Baltimore Blvd.
College Park, MD

HARMONY HUT
3815 Branch Ave.
Marlow Hgts., MD

CALENDAR OF DELIGHTS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

MUSIC

National Symphony Orchestra; JFK; 8:30pm; 254-3600
Jonathan Edwards & Jim Dawson; Cellar Door; 337-3389
The Platters; the Stardust; 843-6233

FILMS

Point of Order & FJK– Years of Lightning, Days of Drums; Circle Theatre; 337-4470
Evergreen & Sailing Along; Inner Circle; 337-4470

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

BIRTHDAYS

Brian Jones, Joe South, Alex Taylor

MUSIC

National Symphony Orch. (see Feb. 27)
Jonathan Edwards & Jim Dawson (see Feb. 27)
The Platters (see Feb. 27)

FILMS

Point of Order & JFK (see Feb. 27)
The Red Shoes & Queen of Spades; Inner Circle; 337-4470

EVENTS

The Image of Innocence – lecture, Dr. Lois Fink; Nat'l Coll. of Fine Arts; 4pm; free
Bike Symposium; Ballroom, Twin Bridges Marriott, Va. $5 9am-4pm; must register; 426-6700
Auction; persian rugs, jewelry, paintings; Holiday Inn, 5520 Wisconsin Ave.; 7pm

THURSDAY, MARCH 1

BIRTHDAYS

Roger Daltry (Who), Glenn Miller, Dinah Shore, Harry Belafonte, Ralph Gleason

MUSIC

Liz Meyer & Friends; Childe Harold; 9:30pm-2am; 483-6702
National Symphony Orch. (see Feb. 27)
Jonathan Edwards (see Feb. 27)
The Platters (see Feb. 27)

FILMS

Sky Avove, Mud Below & Lord of the Flies; Circle; 337-4470
The Red Shoes & Queen of Spades (see Feb. 28)

EVENTS

Beginning of Anacostia Museum Young People's Art Fest. Smithsonian's Anacostia Neighborhood Museum – 2405 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave., S.E. thru March – 678-1200
Under Milkwood –play– British Embassy Rotunda; 8pm $3; 462-1340 Ext. 504.

FRIDAY, MARCH 2

BIRTHDAYS

Kurt Weill, Keith Potger (Seekers), John Cowsill, Willie Chambers, Jay Osmond, Karen Carpenter, Lou Reed

MUSIC

Liz Meyer & Friends (see March 1)
Recorder concert & opening of Arts & Crafts show for Women's Fest; Comm. Bkshop; 8pm; 833-8228
Sousa Celebration; JFK; 8:30; 254-3600
Meg Christian; Mr. Henry's Washington Circle; 10:30pm-2:30am; 337-0222
Jonathan Edwards (see Feb. 27)
The Platters (see Feb. 27)
Joseph Fuchs (violin) & Joseph Villa (piano); Coolidge Aud.; 8:30; 393-4463

FILMS

Soul to Soul; Outer Circle I; 244-3116
Oh Calcutta; Dupont Circle; 785-2300
Wait Until Dark & The Heart is a Lonely Hunter; Circle 337-4470
King of Hearts & the Producers; Inner Circle

EVENTS

Ballet – Days of Wine & Roses; Cramton Aud.; 8:30; $25-$3 TU2-4039
The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie; Chevy Chase Players; C.C.C.C. Aud.; 8pm; $2.50, $1.50 students; 942-0165
Under Milkwood (see March 1)
Benefit Dance Marathon; American U. Conference Room, Mary Gradyn Center; 8pm-8am; $1 spectators, $1.50 dancers in contest for prizes; 356-7443

SATURDAY, MARCH 3

BIRTHDAYS

Mike Pender (Searchers), Chris Stainton

MUSIC

Liz Meyer & Friends 9:30pm-3am (see March 1)
Bach Aria Group; JFK; 8:30; 254-3600
World Premiere of "Tribute to Martin Luther King" – a work for baritone & orchestra – Peabody Symphony Orchestra 8 pm; Shriver Hall, Johns Hopkins; $3, $1.50 students, (301) 837-0600 Ext. 23
Meg Christian (see March 2)
Jonathan Edwards (see Feb. 27)
The Platters (see Feb. 27)

FILMS

Soul to Soul (see March 2)
Oh, Calcutta (see March 2)
Wait Until Dark & The Heart is a Lonely Hunter (see Mar. 2)
King of Hearts & The Producers (see March 2)

EVENTS

plays – American Indian Theatre Ensemble (See IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD, page 2)
play – Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (see March 2)
play – Under Milkwood (see March 1)

SUNDAY, MARCH 4

BIRTHDAYS

Chastity Bono, Chris Squire (Yes)

MUSIC

Alfred Brendel, Pianist, JFK; 3pm; 254-3600
Hootenanny; Cellar Door, live over WGTB-FM, 90.1
Bill Withers & The Spinners; Catholic U. Gym; 8pm $3; 965-9650

FILMS

Putney Swope & Medium Cool; Circle Theatre; 333-4470
King of Hearts & The Producers (see March 2)

EVENTS

Senegalese National Dance Co.; JFK; 8:30; 254-3600
play – Indian Theatre (see March 3)
play – Under Milkwood (see March 1)

MONDAY, MARCH 5

BIRTHDAYS

Rex Harrison

MUSIC

Liz Meyer & Friends; the Keg; 333-9594
Dr. Hook & the Medicine Show; Cellar Door; 337-3389
Theatre Chamber Players; Washington Theatre Club; 8:30 $4.68 & $2.08; 466-8860
Roberta Flack conducting the Frederick Wilkerson Scholarship Foundation Choir & Hall John Spirituals; JFK 8:30; $3.50 - $10.

FILMS

Putney Swope & Medium Cool (see March 4)
King of Hearts & The Producers (see March 2)

EVENTS

play – American Indian Theatre (see March 3)

TUESDAY, MARCH 6

BIRTHDAYS

Mary Wilson (Supremes), Sylvia Robinson (Mickey & Sylvia), Hugh Grundy (Zombies), David Gilmore (Pink Floyd)

MUSIC

Meg Christian; Comm. Bkshop – for women only; 8pm; $1, donation; 833-8228
National Symphony Orchestra; JFK; 8:30; 254-3600
Dr. Hook & Medicine Show; (see March 5)
BeeGees; DAR Const. Hall; 8:30; $4-$6; 338-5992

FILMS

Zero for Conduct & Hospital; Pr. Geo's Comm. College, Bldg. B-114; 8pm; 336-6000
Cyrano de Bergerac & Of Mice & Men; Circle; 337-4470
King of Hearts & The Producers (see March 2)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7

BIRTHDAYS

Mathew Fisher (Procol Harum), Chris Taylor White (Zombies)

MUSIC

Liz Meyer & Friends; (See Feb. 28)
Dr. Hook & Medicine Show (see March 5)

FILMS

Cyrano de Bergerac & Of Mice & Men (see March 6)
King of Hearts & The Producers (see March 2)

THURSDAY, MARCH 8

BIRTHDAYS

Mickey Dolenz, Randy Meisner (Eagles)

MUSIC

Lis Meyer & Friends (see Feb. 27)
Babe, the Far Inn; 9:30-1:30am; 363-0941
Dr. Hook & Medicine Show (see March 5)
Tiny Tim; the Stardust; 843-6233

FILMS

If & Joe Hill, Circle; 337-4470
King of Hearts & The Producers (see March 2)

EVENTS

International Women's Day – 2 Vietnamese women speakers & poetry reading; Comm. Bkshop – women only; 833-8228
play – Woman Potion – by Earth Onion; Cardinal Lounge, Catholic Univ.; 8:30; $1 without student ID
play – Celebration – Pr. Geo's Comm. College, Fine Arts Ctr 8:15pm; 336-6000 Ext. 397

FRIDAY, MARCH 9

BIRTHDAYS

Keely Smith, Lloyd Price, Al Jardine (Beach Boys) Robin Trower (Procol Harum), Mark Lindsay

MUSIC

Babe (see March 8)
Meg Christian; (see March 2)
The Clancy Brothers; JFK; 8:30; $4-$6; 338-5992
Bill Monroe; GWU Lisner Aud.; 8:30; $4-$5.50; b54-6000
Dr. Hook & Medicine Show (see March 5)
Tiny Tim (see March 8)

FILMS

Gimme Shelter; Outer Circle; 244-3116
Duck Soup & My Little Chickadee; Dupont Circle; 785-2300
Performance & The Devils; Circle; 337-4470

EVENTS

play – Prime of Miss Jean Brodie – (see March 2)
play – Celebration – (See March 8)

SATURDAY, MARCH 10

BIRTHDAYS

Eddie Grundy (Bloodrock)

MUSIC

Babe (see March 8)
Paul Hill Choral; JFK; 8:30; 254-3600
Tiny Tim (see March 8)
John McLaughlin & Mahavishnu Orch.; DAR Const. Hall; 8:30; 338-5992
Dr. Hook & Medicine Show (see March 5)
Meg Christian (see March 2)

FILMS

[[See March 9]]

EVENTS

Saeko Ichinoke & Co. – Japanese Dance); Museum of Nat'l History Aud.; 8:30; 381-5395
play – Prime of Miss Jean Brodie – (see March 2)

SUNDAY, MARCH 11

BIRTHDAYS

Richard Sales (Sky Cobb), Lawrence Welk, Ric Rothwell (Mindbenders)

MUSIC

Liz Meyer & Friends; Gaston Hall, G'town Univ. 8pm; $1.50; 625-4386
Guarrero String Quartet; JFK; 8:30; 254-3600
Hootenany (see March 4)
Sonny Rollings; Museum of Hist. & Tech. Aud. 8pm 381-5395
Bette Midler; JFK; 8:30; $4.50-$6.50; 338-5992
Canned Heat; Shady Grove; 7:30; $4.50-$6.50; (301) 948-3400
Buddy Rich; Friendship Internat'l Hotel, Friendship Airpt.; 8pm $10; (301) 761-7700